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French Engravings of the Eighteenth Century

Baudouin —— Desrais

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No. 80

French Engravings
of the Eighteenth Century
In the Collection of
Joseph Widener, Lynnewood Hall

On ne doit point regarder les excellents graveurs comme de simples copistes: ce sont plutôt des traducteurs qui font passer les beautés d'une langue très riche dans une autre qui l'est moins, mais qui offre des équivalents.—COCHIN.

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FOREWORD

WHEN Monsieur Albert Christophle, who originally formed this collection, was urged to lend some of the prints for exhibition he replied —paraphrasing de Goncourt—"should they be burnt there would be a "gap in the annals of eighteenth-century art. . . ."

After the lapse of nearly thirty-five years a more enlightened consideration has prompted the issue of these four volumes, illustrated with reproductions from the identical prints. When Mr. Joseph Widener acquired the Christophle collection he granted me the privilege to rearrange and classify it and gradually to fill gaps in it according to present day criticism, and has now entrusted me with the task of reviewing and editing an explanative catalogue which should supply ample information on artists and engravers between the time of Louis XV and the Revolution. Thus the safety of the prints has been combined with the desire of sharing the enjoyment of them with friends, while making them useful to students.

Knowing that such a work is not perused throughout like a novel, but is generally consulted in a rambling manner as different subjects may suggest, I have maintained many repetitions in the text so that readers should not depend upon previous or following numbers for the full comment on an artist's technique or an engraver's process.

I cannot too emphatically insist upon one point, viz., that since all men's ideas are old, and only the form in which they are expressed confers upon them a semblance of novelty, the opinions advanced herein do not claim to be either new or original, but merely to wear a garb of their own. The views so taken have been linked together and presented as a mosaic into which are also set whatever facts and quotations might throw more light on the period illustrated by the engravings. As remarked with reference to Baudouin's "Amour à l'épreuve," there is more of the philosophy of history in French eighteenth-century prints than appears at first sight.

While the successful writer may know only, but should know well, the language in which he writes, ample allowance ought to be made for the fact that these descriptive notices have not been thought in English, and if the unilingual reader is inclined to object to similes, deductions, and turns of phrase which are neither English nor American, yet he must admit that the characteristics and liberties of French art are best discussed according to a French turn of mind.

The agreeable duty is incumbent upon me of thanking Monsieur A. Danlos, Madame Rousseau-Girard, and Monsieur E. Rahir, who in the course of four years have readily answered repeated queries, contributing thereby much information to a work which without their knowledge and personal help would have been incomplete. The facilities granted in the Reading and Print Rooms of the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, and the British Museum have done the rest.

EDWARD CLAYTON.

LONDON,
March 1923.

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PIERRE ANTOINE BAUDOUIN

(1723-1769)

HAVING once appropriated and adapted to a different medium the lighter artistic qualities of his wife's father, surely if in the narrow range of his travels BAUDOUIN ever applied for a passport, after describing himself as the leading *gouacheur* of the naughty manners of the day, he would have added as distinctive mark, "son-in-law of Boucher." His talent did not need it, yet he turned that relationship to account.

Mariette, as well as Grimm and Diderot,[1] condemned his indelicacy: "Had he "not confined himself to small pictures and smaller ideas suited to the boudoir "of a dancer or a dandy's dressing room, he would have made less money and "gathered no remorse."

A hundred years or so later, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, leaders of the revival of interest in eighteenth-century art, suggested an ingenious apology for the subjects which Baudouin saved from vulgarity by glossing them over with grace and sentiment: "If the prints which reproduce his work had been lost to us, "there would be a gap in the records of the time of Louis XV. How could we, "without such plates as the 'Carquois,' the 'Couché,' or the 'Danger' [Nos. 4, 9, 11], "form any idea of the luxurious atmosphere emanating from those silk hangings "and the sinuous lines of that furniture; how picture to ourselves the tepid evenings "in sumptuous apartments, where amourous silhouettes moved to and fro before "the footlights of discreet chimney fires?"

A still more poetic absolution is bestowed by the liberal hand of Lady Dilke: "After all, indiscretions even such as Baudouin committed, are softened by the "lapse of time and what may have seemed indecent to his contemporaries appears "to us now with something of the gravity of a vision from the dead past."

So much for the exuberant liveliness of a brush singularly fit to interpret sheer wantonness, or to score, so to speak, the most frivolous passages in Louis XV's light opera. With wondrous dexterity Baudouin turned the coarse, plastery Italian guazzo into an original process in which pigments, including white, diluted with gum and honey, attain almost the solidity and warmth of the usual colours.

Avoiding the cold finish of miniatures, he kept his compositions within the vagueness of a sketch, relieved by leaping streaks of light, by sparkles of iridescent hues caught from soap bubbles and till then untried. After a few exhibitions his success was such that in 1763 the Academy doors were thrown open to a daring little master who had never painted in oils.

If scarcely any original work of Baudouin remains, if what has been his is almost entirely retouched, made to shine and look pretty, the explanation is obvious. In the general sweep that carried off eighteenth-century art under neo-classic influences, with the transformations of rich interiors and a drastic weeding of collections, *gouaches* fared worse than oil paintings and drawings, worse even than prints. They fell into a moral as well as a material discredit; exposure and rough handling had scaled and chipped them off, their colours were found perishable, the whites doomed to turn black, the subjects objectionable, the style wanting. If occasionally a demand was ventured for such discarded indiscretions, a still more indiscreet restorer was requisitioned who neither understood the intentional unfinish of the work, nor the mixing of the particular mediums. From the injured spots the repairs would extend all over the picture, turning it more or less into that finical pink sort of miniature which it had never been intended to resemble.

Perhaps the only intact Baudouin in existence is "l'Épouse indiscrète" in the Veil Picard collection (No. 13); next in order of fair preservation come "le Matin" and "les Soins tardifs" (Nos. 22, 31); as for the "Couché de la mariée" (No. 9), the clock on the mantelpiece appears to be the sole feature of the original that escaped renovation. For a pencil sketch the "Fruit de l'amour" at the Louvre (No. 14) is in very good condition.

Salient gifts of Baudouin, as evidenced by every print after him, were the happy grouping of his marionettes, their harmonious setting or *mise en scène*, and a skilful play of lights beating sideways upon the centre of the stage, as if projected from a magic lantern—for grown-ups. As a colourist, with his renovated process, he stood alone. Next to him, if we except Lavreince, Hoin, and Taunay, the small crowd of *gouacheurs* whose brushes were dipped in his wake proved to be no more than over-careful journeymen, without the dash, the sleight of hand of their leader; Freudenberg in comparison was elaborate and stilted; Lavreince himself never quite got rid of an innate "miniaturism."

From the standpoint of posterity, and because of the frailty of his mediums, the

son-in-law of Boucher owes more than any painter to the finest etchers and burinists of the time. With his ambitious *pochades* (the word was coined for them) hastily outlined, finished only as to meaning, Moreau, de Launay, Simonet, performed wonders of interpretation. By imparting contours and modelling to mere jottings of suggestive romances, by rendering more real those visions of pleasure, they have produced the pertest and most beautiful line engravings of the School. To compare the genuine *gouache* of "l'Épouse indiscrète" with de Launay's etching is to ratify an old precept: "A fine print should be liker than the original picture."

[1] The correspondence of these three men, personal and prejudiced as it was, contains the most readable art criticisms of the eighteenth century, free from the pedantries of ordinary virtuosos.

P. J. MARIETTE (1694-1774), printseller, publisher, and collector, exercised an authority with which every dealer, artist, and engraver had to reckon. Consummate connoisseurship led him instinctively to great works, rendering him insensible to the caprice of fashions. His "Abecedario," the prototype of all *catalogues raisonnés*, is a monument of learning. His portfolios of engravings, along with those of Count de Caylus, formed the nucleus of the collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

D. DIDEROT (1713-1784), perhaps the most marked French personality of his time, had opinions on all subjects and the courage thereof; for an atheist his austerity, an acquired taste, was called his second manner. The conversationalist speaks through his letters, and presents the liveliest pictures of the intellectual movement of the century. One of the founders of the Encyclopædia, he wrote for it the article on beauty "which must be not only beautiful but also good; as plastic works should help towards the circu-"lation of morality" (a point of view hardly in keeping with the works of Baudouin). Having derived the soundest feature of his artistic education from the science of seeing, this great theorist gave such relief and life to his ideas on the purport of line and colour, that he almost endowed his countrymen with a new sense: criticism. He knew which brains to pick. Chardin and Falconet were the sources of his technical information on painting and sculpture, as Cochin was on engraving.

BARON GRIMM (1723-1807), a critic closely associated with Diderot and the Encyclopædists, lived mostly in Paris, where he was known as agent for the art purchases of Catherine II, and as the literary *chargé d'affaires* of eight northern sovereigns. He left an invaluable correspondence showing the keenest insight into every subject of interest to Parisians from 1750 to 1790. His letters to Catherine II were signed "Pleureur."

1, 2.

L'AMOUR À L'ÉPREUVE—L'AMOUR FRIVOLE

A pair engraved by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet

First finished state.
Bocher, Nos. 5, 6.

A PROMINENT note of interrogation should follow the classification of this pair among the engravings after Baudouin.

That both are strongly reminiscent of the style of Boucher there is no doubt. Yet, even though "Boucher pinxit" was inscribed on the respective second states, modern critics discern through both compositions the manner of Baudouin and his early endeavours to trade on the success of his father-in-law, after having mastered his technique and lighter characteristics, his grouping and draperies, his partiality to prettiness rather than to beauty, his lack of repose.[1]

On principle, Bocher gives way to such arguments and accordingly enters the pair in the catalogue of Baudouin's works, not without making his reserves over the paternity of the "Amour à l'épreuve," which he would rather attribute to a third painter of lesser renown. He quotes the following entry under the name of Barbier from a sale catalogue in 1777: "A gouache obviously inspired by the "notorious misfortune of Seguret, the magistrate, who on returning home from the "law courts, finds company in his bedroom, places his square cap on the bolster and "withdraws." "We have there," concludes Bocher, "the concise and accurate "description of the disputed picture."

However much to the point, the reference does not dispose of the supposition that either Barbier may have copied a Boucher, or else that Beauvarlet, the engraver, improved upon his work. If the *gouache* presented the artistic merit of the print, then Barbier's talent must have been singularly overlooked at the time, for there is hardly any record of his name. For arrangement and balance "l'Amour à l'épreuve," the most Boucher-like of the pair, is superior to "l'Amour frivole." No etching of the latter exists.

Another and inferior reproduction of the first was given "Love caught asleep" as a more appropriate title, although that of "Love on trial" had an incriminating turn suited to the judicial dignity of the injured party in an unusual family group.

Whether the ethics—or otherwise—of later pictures by a Baudouin, sure of himself and of his well-thought-out indiscretions, were of a lower order than those

of the early Boucher,[1] is a moot point. The fact is, the playful son-in-law, by stretching the reach of suggestive compositions from the unreality of Olympian clouds or Arcadian farms to the conspicuousness of "modern style" interiors, translated deliberately into prose the poetry of his relative and master. By turning nymphs and fauns into obvious sensualists about town, his brush contributed unconsciously to stir popular sentiment against the idle rich who, when put on trial, were to be found wanting.

There is more in these prints, more of the philosophy of French history, than appears at the first blush.

[1] Delteil is of opinion that Boucher's name was written under this pair in order to obtain a readier sale.

3.

LE BAIN

Engraved by Nicolas François Regnault, printed in colours

First state, undescribed by Bocher.
Bocher, No. 12.

With Regnault (1746-18—?) as well as with Janinet and Descourtis, we come to the champions of colour engraving from whom Debucourt, their fortunate rival, derived the method of his early works.

The eldest of the trio was a painter who trained himself as an engraver with a technique of closely dotted lines borrowed from Bonnet and vaguely resembling the English mezzotinto process, with which few Frenchmen could grapple successfully. His two finest prints, "Le Bain" and its companion "le Lever" (No. 298) issued by Delalande in 1783, looked so distinctly like miniatures, that dealers in knick-knacks secured almost all the impressions and, having cut them close, framed them as originals under glass on fancy boxes and paper weights. The purpose to which such exquisite facsimiles were turned accounts for the over-finished, velvety look contrived by Regnault in the interpretation of a sketchy and dashed-off Baudouin.

With the exception of one in the Mühlbacher collection, sold in 1881, no proof of "le Bain" is known in such perfect condition as this. Bocher has erroneously entered as first a later state with title, address, and artists' names. Bourcard raves over a print so rarely found with margins, but his pen slips when speaking of it as "Baudouin's miniature of 1731." Were the reference correct, the artist at eight years of age would have chosen the style least suited to his bent.

Indifferent and bad imitations of Regnault's two best plates abound and thrive.

LE BAIN

By N. F. Regnault. After P. A. Baudouin

4.

LE CARQUOIS ÉPUISÉ

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

First finished state.
Bocher, No. 11.

N de LAUNAY (1739-1792), with a talent as conspicuous as any that issued from the school of Lebas, was the pupil of Lempereur.

Equally remarkable as an etcher and a burinist, as a book illustrator and an engraver of large plates, from the "Billet doux" or the "Escarpolette," the "Petit jour" or the "Heureux moment" (Nos. 243, 155, 177, 254) to the vignettes for Dorat's "Baisers" and "Fables," the Ovid of 1767-1771, the Molière de Bret, the Rousseau of 1774-1783, his crisp and harmonious work was much more thorough and complex than would outwardly appear. He re-touched and focussed the minutest details, actually re-drawing the subjects entrusted to his interpretation, probably because such rough diamonds as Baudouin's *gouaches* needed faceting over again and the modelling of Lavreince must be corrected. To him was principally due the popularity of stippling, which, however, he reserved appropriately for the features of his figures.[1] "Eyes that have been resting on his delicate, airy lines," writes Lady Dilke, "feel the transition to ruder or minor virtues."

As de Launay was the chief exponent of the *estampe galante*, it is well to point out that this adjective in eighteenth-century French differed as much from the English gallant as it did from questionable or suggestive, and that it would by no means apply to a few plates of an indelicate character on which the artist used the pseudonym of de Valnay. The accurate interpretation is given in the Latin rendering of the title of the "Assemblée galante," engraved by Lebas after Watteau: *urbanitatis coetus*. "Galant," says Larousse, "is the man particularly "courteous or attentive to ladies."

The "Carquois" takes first rank among those boudoir scenes which during the latter half of the eighteenth century shouldered historical engraving out of sight. Of the original *gouache*, exhibited in 1765, Mathon de la Cour wrote: "It "occurs to me that no objection is ever raised to mythological subjects however "suggestive, while most eyes pretend to be shocked by romances of modern society "in paintings, probably because whatever comes nearer home affects us more than "the vagaries of former generations. The déshabillé of the young woman strikes "me as original and refined."[2]

From morality to fashions the critic's transition is abrupt, although the dress must have impressed bystanders as being in better taste than the name of "Fille éconduite," given by Baudouin to the composition. In his etching, de Launay had maintained the bunch of roses placed by the painter at the feet of the marble Cupid, but as the advisability of a less questionable title suggested itself when the print was dedicated to His Highness the Prince of Guemenée, Reversionary Commander of the Royal Body-Guards, a happy thought struck his humble and most obedient servant, the engraver, who, under the statue of "Laughing love," substituted for the flowers an empty and upset quiver, and inscribed the composition: "Carquois épuisé." To a certain extent appearances were saved.

On this point Mr. Courboin remarks that, as there were prints with too many signatures—Baublé, Aubin, Drouot, Montulay, the leading letter engravers, being eager to affix their name under the legend—so there were plates with too many inscriptions and dedications, each dedicatee being styled according to the most ceremonious and pompous form.

"That a previous permission was needed is shown by a letter from Chardin "begging leave to inscribe to the Marquis de Vandières—*d'avant hier?*—the "brother of Pompadour, the 'Dame à la serinette,' and to mention that the picture "was in his collection. Having submitted a similar request to a nobleman, who "immediately enquired whether any cost was involved by it, in which case he "would refuse, Lebas replied: 'I shall make him a present of the right to pass "'himself off as a patron of the arts and, besides a dozen impressions of my print, "'he shall have one in a richly emblazoned frame.' But these were exceptions; "the highest personages agreed without haughtiness and with still less prudery to "have their armorial bearings on many a serious or frolicsome plate. There is no "'Carquois épuisé,' no 'Soirée des Thuileries,' no 'Amant surpris,' no 'Petit jour' "[Nos. 4, 32, 59, 177] that does not find shelter under some exalted heraldic shield. "Engravers are not particular about expenses neither for the subject nor for the "complimentary vignette; they lavish their skill upon them, in fact they squander it "away, say some sour critics. That may be: but these everlasting themes of "*Amants surpris, Carquois épuisés*, how are they engraved nowadays, or where "is the artist capable of inducing a Senator, or the President of the Chamber, or "the wife of a Minister of the Athenian Republic to accept the dedication?"

[1] Much to the detriment of rich, sensitive, and velvety mezzotint effects, the new method became the rage in England, where Bartolozzi turned it to account and applied it to the whole subject. Of de Launay, Bartolozzi used to speak as "il Re," the King of his art.

[2] CH. MATHON DE LA COUR (1738-1793), whose letters on the Salons from 1762 to 1767 contain many sensible appreciations, taught science and languages, patronized whatever aimed at the public good, from infant schools to cheap corn grinding, and presented Lyons with a lyceum, an art exhibition hall, and a complete system of water-works. Having led the resistance to the siege of that city by the army of the Convention, he was guillotined. In an ingenious jest, "The Testament of Fortuné Ricard" (1785), he offers to pay a premium to peaceful nations and to settle the French and English national debts.

5, 6.

LE CATÉCHISME—LE CONFESSIONAL

A pair engraved by Pierre Etienne Moitte

First states.
Coat of arms of Councillor Trudaine.
Bocher, Nos. 12 and 15.

MOITTE (1722-1780), a pupil of Beauvarlet, engraved portraits, historical subjects, and many vignettes after Gravelot. Portalis quotes the "Confessional" and "Catéchisme" as his best works. A print of his, reproducing Pigalle's statue of Louis XV at Rheims, was roughly handled by Diderot: "A special talent is "needed to transfer to paper all the faults of a bronze and make a king look like a "carter." Later on, however, Diderot had occasion to refer to "Moitte's velvety "burin which can render to perfection the suppleness of flesh." Moitte had four sons, all engravers of lesser merit; he was himself an indifferent painter.

In his judicious remarks on the Salon of 1763, Mathon de la Cour commented upon the *gouache* of the "Catéchisme": "Among a lively swarm of damsels whom "for once Baudouin follows to Sunday-school, the most remarked is bound to be "the boldest who takes a love-letter from a young fellow, while cunningly pretend-"ing to talk to another girl."

The "Confessional," exhibited two years later, raised a regular storm in a holy-water vessel, when by request of the Archbishop of Paris it was withdrawn from the Salon because of its profanity. For once Diderot was amused: "A father "confessor takes to task two young scamps who, having entered the church, either "by chance or because it is raining, make eyes at the fair penitents. One of them, "fearing the joke may end badly, tries to drag his friend away. The idea seems "funny, but the Archbishop somehow does not think so."

Opinions were divided. Bachaumont wrote in his turn: "The episcopal censor "wants to extend his vigilance over a few more pictures; his hands will be full, if "only he has his way."

Bourcard lays stress on the marked difference between proofs and lettered impressions of this pair of prints, urging amateurs to be on the look-out for the first—if available.

Edmond de Goncourt does not accept as genuine the *gouache* of the "Catéchisme" in the collection of Baron E. de Rothschild.

7.

LES CERISES

Engraved by Nicolas Ponce

First state.
Coat of arms of the Marquis de Choiseul Beaupré.
Bocher, No. 13.

THE second best work of Ponce next to the "Enlèvement"; no impression of it is known before letters.

The composition is said to have been suggested by Boucher to Baudouin, who, under the title of "la Cueillette des cerises," exhibited the *gouache* at the Salon of 1765. All Diderot had to write about it was: "coarse idea." Ponce made amends for his own share of responsibility in spreading the latter, when his learned tastes led him to engrave duller subjects.

8.

LE CHEMIN DE LA FORTUNE

Engraved by Nicholas Joseph Voyez l'Aîné

Two impressions: first and second states.
Bocher, No. 14.

THE note of interrogation which stands for the date of the death of VOYEZ Senior (1742-?) is in keeping with the blanks in his biography. We know that, together with Voyez Junior, he was one of the best pupils of Beauvarlet, and that this print is his masterpiece, as the "Fruit de l'amour" is of V. le Jeune. Their relationship has not been defined, and as thirty-two years elapsed between their respective births, one wonders how they could have been trained in the same *atelier*. Judging from "le Fruit," the younger engraver may be credited with the finest burin.

The sale catalogue of the Prault collection in 1780 mentions the original picture. A pen drawing of it, sold some twenty years ago in Paris, showed numerous *gouache* re-touches where the engraver's work needed strengthening, and one of the few existing autographs of Baudouin refers to it in detail.

Among the accessories of the lively composition, besides the score of "Castor and Pollux"[1] on the harpsichord, a mythological helmet is puzzling, unless it be a stage property. Round the fleuron on the lower border of the print is a high-flown quotation: "Therpsicore affectus cytharis movet, imperat, auget"—With the lyre Terpsichore rouses, leads, fosters our passions. No wonder capers were raised to a fine art.

Do we witness the beginning of a great career? Is a star rising over Paris? Judging from appearances, the self-assertive candidate is hardly in need of her mother's introduction; the dancing master will accept and engage her at once. Already he goes into raptures over her ankle and is on the point of dropping his violin. The elderly art patron, in whose sumptuous apartment[2] the scene is laid, applauds the charms of so promising a votary to the seventh Muse.

The "Mercure de France" in 1778 commended the intelligence of Voyez in interpreting Baudouin's *comico-galant* scene and expressed utmost confidence in the *danseuse's* success.

Bonnet, of pseudo-pastel fame, reproduced this subject with some ill-advised

alterations which called for a slight change in the title: "The First step to fortune."

[1] A ballet had been introduced into Rameau's *chef-d'œuvre*, the greatest operatic success of the first half of the eighteenth century.

[2] The decoration of the room represented shows that the revival of classical lines was not due to the Revolution, and that a reaction against the Louis XVI style had been in progress among architects several years before the break-up of the Monarchy.

LE COUCHÉ DE LA MARIÉE

By Moreau le Jeune and Simonet. After P. A. Baudouin

9.

LE COUCHÉ DE LA MARIÉE

Etched by Moreau le Jeune in 1768, finished by Jean Baptiste Simonet

The etching and the second state.
Coat of arms of Count d'Hautefort.
Bocher, No. 16 under Baudouin and No. 232 under Moreau.

OF the etching of this, the most famous and desirable print of the time of Louis XV, only twenty-four impressions were taken, some of them reversed, as is ascertained by a note in Moreau's handwriting on the back of one of them. After the etching came a first finished state with the signature "J. M. Moreau le Jeune 1768" in dry-point, then a second with the coat of arms of Count d'Hautefort, without any letters, finally a third with the title, the dedication to that nobleman, the initials A.P.D.R. denoting the royal privilege, and the names of Baudouin as *gouache* painter, of Moreau le Jeune as etcher, and Simonet as burinist. The price of eight livres was charged for the latter impression at Moreau's, "rue de la Harpe vis à vis Mr. Le Bas."[1]

The original picture, exhibited at the Salon of 1767, was first sold in February 1782 for 853 livres with the collection of the Marquis de Ménars; then, five years later, at the great sale of Beaujon, Court banker and art patron, it went for 480 livres to the engraver Coclers, who sold it again in 1789, the year of Fraternity. Its next public reappearance was in 1868 at the Didier sale, when it fetched 2020 francs. What restorers have left of it is now in the collection of Baron E. de Rothschild. An old and much discussed replica belongs to Mr. Groult. Nobody knows what became of Baudouin's black-and-white drawing on grey paper, mentioned as "le Couché" in the catalogue of an auction in 1785.

Though the subject was less suggestive than its title, critics' throats grew hoarse, streams of ink flowed on the first appearance of this sensational *gouache*. The violence of the attacks spoke for its success; Diderot mounted his war horse: "Tell me, Mr. Baudouin, in what country on earth does the scene take place? "Surely not in France or else an old woman is wanting on the scene. What a "great simpleton you must be, if for the occasion you can only think of a flock of "parlour-maids," and so on; the argument being that Greuze would have handled

the scene with pathos and tact. Diderot missed the variety of expressions his favourite master might have called into play, by bringing a lachrymose mother, a white-haired grandfather, brothers, sisters, and friends, to take leave of the bride till the morrow. The tirade, nearer to the grotesque than the sublime, suggests a vaudeville until it drifts on to depravity in art. For an atheist, Diderot reminds one of Tartufe, though he plainly shows his foregone conclusions and prejudiced spectacles by declaring that the artist gave the maids fussing about the room "an ignoble, vulgar look to save the indecency of their rôle."

As for the picture itself, he speaks of mediocrity, "although the bride cuts a "pretty figure, her head daintily drawn. The back view of the bridegroom suggests "an empty bag, at best a jumping frog in a dressing-gown. What of the time, the "hour? There is no night in the room. Should we not speak of a night scene "painted the next day? At night in France shadows are strong, consequently "lighted spots flash out. Here all is grey, dull as ditch-water. The girl who turns "down the bed clothes is nicely got up. . . ."

The "Mercure de France" of September 1770 advertised the engraving: "Moreau le Jeune, one of the best pupils of Lebas, has undertaken the etching: "Simonet is finishing it with the burin. No doubt the subject, as well as the "delicate and careful execution, will appeal to amateurs. Who could call the scene "otherwise than sweet and pure? the bride shows feeling, the young husband "swears he will love her always; the mother and the maids give movement and "brightness to the composition. And what a splendid apartment, what wealth of "details."

Indeed, we have here a stupendous specimen of the Louis XV style, a document for the upholsterer, the decorator, the gilder, the cabinet-maker; from the circular Aubusson carpet, all garlands and leaves, to the huge canopied and plumed bed; from the chiselled mantelpiece to the fluted Corinthian pillars. What a play-ground the ceiling for mischievous and chubby Cupids, spoilt children of Boucher, swaying in pairs, scattering flowers and temptations! What magnificently carved wreaths resting on urns high up against the vault, falling from the balcony to the cornice, undulating above the mirror, waving in double festoons around the room, then rising again on either side of a slightly bulging door to linger on the sculptured family shield crowned by Loves! Those splendid wreaths, acting as fillips to winding curves, nowhere to be seen to-day, except in museums as shattered relics, torn down by the rectilinear Louis XVI creed, those gilt wood garlands have survived only on prints after Baudouin and Lavreince.[2]

Were it merely to summon from the crumbled past a vision of French pre-revolutionary interiors, the homes of a privileged few with their careless fill of the joy of living, it would still be a treat to scan the minute details treasured within these exquisite plates; from the most alluring of all, the "Couché," to adjourn to the "Danger du tête-à-tête" and the "Billet doux"; to step from "la

Consolation de l'absence" to "l'Heureux moment" or "le Roman dangereux." Liberty and equality, guests uninvited, have entered the house, upset the furniture, shattered the puppets. No more laughing now: *fini de rire.* A few prints survive.

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As most of the craftsmen trained under Lebas were wont to confine themselves exclusively, according to their bent, either to etching or else to the task of finishing a plate with the burin: *finissage,* Moreau le Jeune and Cochin, the leading aquafortists hailing from that great workshop, made a speciality of first states of sensational prints. Their preparations showed so much spirit and skill that the additions introduced by collaborators amounted at times, says Mr. Courboin, to a superfluous explanation: "an etching by Moreau being such a clear and fine song "that the accompanist needed all his tact not to play too loud."

"Le Couché" established the reputation of the engraver, who, having thoroughly overcome the craft's aridity, handled his dry-point as if Baudouin's own brush had bitten the copper, streaking it with brilliance and light, outlining into it the daintiest figures, lavishing over it all the supreme gift of crispness. Owing to so masterly and personal an interpretation the subject rightfully belongs to Moreau as much as to Baudouin, and though Simonet finished this print as well as "le Modèle honnête" (No. 27), both by the general consent of French critics are classified among the works of Moreau le Jeune. In the words of de Goncourt: "A collector's ambition should be to secure one of the twenty-four etchings of "this perfect achievement of the 'galant' art of a period."[3]

Mr. Schefer remarks that Moreau himself might have signed "le Couché," at least in part: "No doubt its architectonic and decorative arrangements are more "sumptuous, the hangings of richer materials and more complicately draped than "any introduced in the somewhat bare interiors of the *Monument du costume*; but "the figures represented are obviously connected with the preliminary studies of "women which fill the artist's sketch books." Indeed, what could be more Moreau-like than the profile of the young mother comforting the bride, than the spruce silhouette of the girl putting the lights out, or even than the smartly tucked-up dress of the tire-woman lifting the sheets? The *gouache* has sketched what the etching has focussed. Moreau acts the play prompted by Baudouin, to whom, as well as to Clodion, more so than to Cochin, he owes his favourite feminine type.

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That "le Couché" has been subject to imitations and counterfeits need hardly be added. A German adaptation, "dedicated to young couples by a friend of the "fair sex," shows the bride seated, one of the maids taking off her shoes. Another,

a small folio dated 1820, is entitled "Hesitation." At French watering places no art shop is without an undescribed *coloured* impression of the real "Couché," discovered the day before at a neighbouring château. With his hard and stilted "Lever de la mariée," Dugure attempted to give a companion to Baudouin's composition and Trière engraved it without success, one of the maids in it appearing to be six feet tall.[4]

The obsolete spelling of the word "Couché" as a past participle, not as the substantive "coucher," is typical of the time, and should be maintained with reference to this print.

[1] The thirty-three different impressions of the "St. George" by Gaillard after Raphael are quoted as a record of the varying plurality of states between this and that print. With French engravings of the eighteenth century, four great classifications can be set down:

The etching.

The first state or finished impression, bearing no other letters but the artists' names scratched.

The second, with the title and coat of arms.

The third, which generally includes a dedication and the publishers' address.

Each state often leads to one or more subdivisions, of which a special feature may be the insertion or the obliteration of the capitals A.P.D.R.—*avec privilège du Roi*—with the King's privilege.

According to a decree of 1777, the artist who meant to trade personally on his works, applied for the royal grant of a privilege to hold good for his heirs, unless his rights were ceded to a publisher. When, in 1789, the decree was repealed in favour of copyright pure and simple, those initials were suppressed on the prints, but it is an error to suppose that the A.P.D.R. mention was the exclusive hall-mark of early impressions. As long as the privilege had not been forfeited by its holder, many plates of the time of Louis XVI bore the same four capitals down to the last state, whatever their condition. On the impressions of the "Monument du costume" taken after 1789, the four letters and the intermediary dots are still discernible through the erasure, but although the plates themselves were by no means worn out, collectors shun them as having been tampered with and shorn of an original attribute.

The same plate sometimes was printed on various kinds of paper, such as the famous pair after St. Aubin, "le Bal paré" and "le Concert," some impressions of which are on strong rough paper, others on medium Dutch. Presentation copies of portraits were even printed on silk. As a rule, any authentic difference in the successive printing of a plate makes a corresponding state; marginless prints alone being excluded from the classification of states, however great their artistic merit may be.

Already in the eighteenth century, differences of states attracted the attention of amateurs. The anonymous "Letters of a Traveller in Paris," published in 1779, throw a curious light on this point: "Just "as there are prints and prints, there are also impressions and impressions: some before letters and "signatures: some without or with a pompous dedication and the corresponding coat of arms; others "where the engraving itself betrays a worn-out plate. Such apparently minor rubrics are the gold mine "of the craft, and prick the curiosity of connoisseurs whose ambition it is to gather states with remarques "and alterations; in fact, a sort of stock-jobbing goes on round the sale of choice impressions of the most "attractive prints."

"Remarque" is the name given to any distinguishing mark made by the artist on an engraving or an etching to indicate a certain state of the plate before completion: thence the designation of "remarque proof."

[2] The English critic who sees in that particular motive of decoration the influence of Grinling Gibbons is mistaken. The delicate carvings preserved in many a stately English home taste of the soil from which Gibbons hailed—Holland—and lack fullness. Fine to the point of being finical, minute as a miniature rendering of Nature, their scope was to adorn in detail a mantelpiece, a mirror, a canopy, not to develop over a whole room a bold, decorative scheme. Taken one by one, Gibbons' flowers and fruits are exquisite: as a whole, Louis XV festoons and wreaths of gilt wood were superb.

[3] In flat contradiction to all standard authorities on the work of Moreau, the author of a preface to the selection of "Line Engravings of the late XVIIIth Century" published in London in 1910, assigns to

Simonet the chief credit for-"le Couché": "There is little doubt that the result would not have been "different had Simonet engraved the plate entirely by himself, . . . for while Moreau was an adept with "the use of a mordant, Simonet was more facile with the pure burin. . . . The nuances of light and shade, "the happy lightness of touch and, above all, that indefinable something which goes under the name of "quality, are the work of Simonet, though this is not said [a relief to the reader] in discredit of Moreau. . . . "No engraving begun and completed by Moreau exists which proves that he ever attained the delicacy and "facility with the burin that are the leading characteristics of the prints of the period."

This ingenuous statement leads one to suppose that the author has never seen the "Coronation of Louis XVI," "le Bal masqué," "le Festin," "la Cinquantaine," and a dozen more compositions drawn and engraved by Moreau le Jeune; that he ignores, above all, the illustrations for La Borde's songs, *chefs-d'œuvre* of the school upon which he writes. His entirely new views are supported by a professed disregard for etchings "not in themselves objects of beauty, having only rarity to recommend them. The "desire to possess them is not born of artistic interest: their value is now on the wane (?): they are useless "for decorative purposes, mere guides to the artist for studying the progressive technique, little more than "a suggestion of the subject in outline. . . ."

Being consistent with his tenets, the author, again, may not have cared to examine the etchings of "le Couché" and "le Modèle," or, realizing how far Moreau's needle could carry a "mere unfinished "state," he would not find it "a difficult question to decide to whom the chief credit of both prints belongs." In the words of Portalis and Beraldi: "If Simonet signed them, Moreau really engraved them. . . . "Simonet merely accentuated Moreau's work by going over it with a light, discreet, and tactful burin "which respected and made transparent every line of a characteristic aquafortis preparation. . . . Such "delicacy of touch greatly pleased Moreau, who from that time on entrusted to Simonet drawings upon "drawings . . . Simonet's leading quality being absolute respect for the models he had to interpret, and "for the pure etchings given him to finish."

The denomination "pure etching" designates the impression taken from the plate as it emerged from the bath of acid into which it had been dipped, before any re-touches by the dry-point or the burin interfered with its first flavour.

French eighteenth-century etchings are rare, not only because scarce at the time, but, above all, because throughout the best part of the nineteenth century they were looked upon as imperfect states with blanks and aggressive contrasts, giving only an incomplete idea of the picture. Most of them were discarded, put to base uses, or destroyed. The story, or rather the history, is known of one of the twenty-four etchings of "le Couché" cut about, folded, and pasted as cover to an unstitched copy of Victor Hugo's "Misérables." The Goncourt brothers scented it on a bookstall of the Quai Voltaire, bought it for a franc, and preserved it as a document of human perversion.

Mr. Mühlbacher, an enlightened collector of drawings and prints after the Franco-Prussian War, was one of the first to seize upon the characteristic superiority of most etchings, that of affording a clearer and more artistic interpretation of the original than is conveyed by finished impressions, which are bound to reflect the interference of that more or less liberal translator, the engraver. "Traduttore, traditore." Mr. Mühlbacher eagerly searched for them and collected an incomparable selection, many if not most of which, at his sensational sale in 1882, found their way quietly to the collection described in this catalogue. Already, at the Wasset auction in 1880, the marvellous etching of "le Couché" had fetched 3,200 francs; another shortly afterwards reached 4,500 francs.

In the delightful words of Mr. Schefer: "L'eau forte c'est la gravure se laissant surprendre en déshabillé" —the etching state is the print caught dressing (or half dressed, or undressed).

[4] A large vignette etched by St. Aubin after Leprince for the "Voyage en Sibérie" of the Abbé d'Auteroche—three folio volumes published in 1768—represents a "Lever de la mariée" of a most undecorative character and singular artistic merit. As an aboriginal counterpart to Baudouin's handling of the bedding of the bride, it is worthy indeed of a print collector. (See No. 275.)

10.

LE CURIEUX

Engraved by Pierre Malœuvre

First finished state before the border.
Bocher, No. 17.

MALŒUVRE (1740-1803), one of the most distinguished pupils of Beauvarlet, worked for several years in London with Strange. Having returned to Paris, he found his opportunity when the unblushing success of Baudouin's "Curieux" created an eager demand for the engraving and sent it through no less than six states.

The somewhat informal subject had been suggested by Boucher to his son-in-law, on the plea, wrote Grimm, that, in his official capacity of first painter to Louis XV, were he to develop it himself, he must omit the medical implement, thus depriving the composition of a striking still-life effect.

Now, if each age has its notions of propriety, it has also its proprietary instincts, although throughout all ages true artists, being essentially imitative, shun commercial Philistinism. In the eighteenth century, a man who first voiced a thought claimed no exclusive right to it, and it was the joy of Boucher, by making free gifts at the expense of his own inventive powers, to stimulate younger artists into breeding those forms of beauty which he had first conceived, or into turning a syringe by way of novelty to pictorial advantage, all copyrights unreserved.

"Curiosity" in this case, or rather its attraction, overstepped the mark. Lavreince borrowed the idea for his own "Contretemps," engraved by Dequevauvillers (No. 249), so did Challe with his "Officious waiting woman," engraved by Chaponnier and printed again in smaller size in colours. Some German dauber produced an imitation of it over the fictitious signature of Bonnet 1782; last, not least, a mediocre reprint of Malœuvre's plate has turned up in our own time under the name of "Le Remède."

The original *gouache* in the collection of Baron E. de Rothschild clears Baudouin of an insinuation for which the engraver must be held responsible. In the picture, the individual who, from behind a glass door, breaks into the privacy of the delicate operation, wears no clerical or Geneva neck-band over his frock. The insertion of that unmistakable badge was a sin against the most elementary taste, as

Malœuvre himself must have realized, for he did away with it in the second state of his print.

How early is the impression before us is denoted on its margins by traces of burin due to superficial experiments made by the engraver before he turned the plate out as finished. Such scratches would be removed from it as soon as two or three experimental proofs were taken.

II.

LE DANGER DU TÊTE-À-TÊTE

Engraved by Jean Baptiste Simonet

First finished state.
Coat of arms of Mr. Boyer de Fonscolombe.
Bocher, No. 18.

WITH a burin as soft as a paint brush, Simonet reproduces here one of Baudouin's finest effects of drawing-room semi-darkness, the light being solely derived from a chimney-fire flaming through the auspicious nightfall. The rich decoration is a perfect specimen of the Louis XV style; so are the minutest details of the costumes.[1]

Diderot, who in his austere phase declared the subject to be fit only for the boudoir of a demirep, was probably unaware that Mlle. Testard, a *danseuse*, had bought the original *gouache*; for the opera star might have indulged in a libel suit against the encyclopædist. Influence she did not lack. Had she not dropped the Prince de Conti to place herself in 1766 under the joint patronage of a Lieutenant-General, Gribeauval, a Magistrate, Donnay de Boullay, a Parliamentary Councillor, Thomé, and a musketeer, Duperrier?

The underlying idea of the composition could hardly shock a society which on the subject of *tête-à-têtes* had little more to learn. What occasion was there to cry out because a young woman tried to keep off a man on bended knees before her? The companion picture, "la Soirée des Thuileries," was decidedly more frisky, and the lady at this fireside might have set her winsome face against such inconsiderate pairing as is confirmed by the insertion of the same coat of arms on both prints. The cynic who suggested it probably meant to show that on a particular step of the social ladder the woman who climbs meets the woman who descends.

[1] To an artist who deplored the unfitness for pictorial effect of looped-up gowns and cut-away coats, of wigs, three-cocked hats, and hoods, Sir Joshua Reynolds replied: "Never mind, they all have light and "shade, as posterity will ascertain."

L'ENLÈVEMENT NOCTURNE

By N. Ponce. After P. A. Baudouin

12.

L'ENLÈVEMENT NOCTURNE

Engraved by Nicolas Ponce in 1780

Two impressions: the first finished state, undescribed by Bocher, and the second, which he describes as first.

The monogram within the fleuron is that of Basan, and shows among other attributes his Dictionary of Engravers.

Bocher, No. 20.

Ponce (1746-1831), a pupil of de Launay, made for himself a name by illustrating some of Dorat's fables. His skill as a collaborator for the Ovid of Basan helped to maintain a fine average of compositions for those remarkable four volumes. Together with Simonet, he reached his highest level as a vignettist in the execution of allegorical designs. However, the place of honour among his works is given to a regular print, the harmonious and fluent "Enlèvement." Baudouin had been dead eleven years and although his largest *gouache* tempted more than one burin, its puzzling play of light and shadows had until then defeated the attempts.

The "Journal de Paris"[1] greeted Ponce's signal success: "Night effect admirably "rendered: moonlight on a print a novelty: should attract connoisseurs."

Whereupon old Diderot, who hated even the posthumous sight of Baudouin, retorted in his correspondence: "This hackneyed elopement over a convent wall, "re-hashed by Ponce, will hardly satisfy the painter's ghost. Absence of darkness "makes the silly scene conspicuously diurnal, wellnigh respectable for a Baudouin, "and accordingly minus its point." But Diderot knew better. Instead of the finished state, the Salon of 1780 had exceptionally shown the etching, where no shadows had been put in.

In advertising the sale of the engraving the "Mercure de France"[2] recommended it as a fit companion to the "Couché de la mariée." The suggestion may have seemed plausible to the publishers: otherwise its pertinency could only be supported by the size and the painter's name.

Bourcard raves over this "delightful plate, greatly sought after before letters."

[1] The "Journal de Paris," the first daily paper in France (1777-1811), contained, according to a skit on its programme, "censored political news, criticism, sermons, bad jokes, racing forecasts, and praise or blame "according to charges." Its offices were pillaged during the Revolution.

[2] The "Mercure de France," a weekly and more fashionable periodical, founded in 1672, continued until the first years of the nineteenth century. It gave the Court news, some gossip, some pieces of poetry, commented on art matters, and was the best advertising medium of the time.

13.

L'ÉPOUSE INDISCRÈTE

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

Two impressions: the etching and the third state.
Coat of arms of the Duke of Zwei Brücken.
Bocher, No. 21.

TWO years after the death of Baudouin his *gouaches* of "l'Épouse" and the "Sentinelle" were shown at the Salon along with the engravings. The "Mercure de France" unctuously remarked: "Both prints in De Launay's most "precious style, full of grace and taste, are capital interpretations of the lively "subjects in which Boucher's son-in-law excelled." The courtly paper appears to have dragged in "taste" out of consideration for the Prince Palatine of the Rhine, to whom the pair was respectfully dedicated.

The original "Épouse," the best preserved of the few works by Baudouin that have survived, illustrates the attention he paid to the attitudes of his little figures, as well as the thoughtful initiative assumed by de Launay when drawing over again the compositions he was about to reproduce. In the picture the wife is standing, her head on a level with the improvised screen, somewhat to the detriment of the balance of the whole scene. In the print, a happy alteration has been introduced, the wife being made to crouch with a spontaneity of action which restores equilibrium to the toss-and-tumble group, the outcome, no doubt, of no end of sketches and trials.

Whether the Salon bystanders saw cause or not for the spouse in question to be suspicious and watchful, history does not say; but the title of the engraving in its third state was uncompromisingly turned to that of "Want of tact." On whose part the want?

This etching is reckoned among de Launay's masterpieces. The mark "H. D." on the back of the impression before us is that of Mr. Dreux, whose small but exceedingly choice collection was sold in 1870, and contained, among others, two Moreau drawings for the "Monument du costume."

14.

LE FRUIT DE L'AMOUR SECRET

Engraved by François Voyez le Jeune

Second state before all letters.
Coat of arms of Count de la Tour du Pin.
Bocher, No. 23.

THE original *gouache*, which at the Salon of 1767 was considered as the finest ever exhibited by Baudouin, bore a title as priggish as that of a seventeenth-century novel: "How the Sense of Love and Nature may for a time give way to "dire Necessity." No less ambitious, though more unusual, was the legend on the frame itself: "fecit amor, pietas mittit, fortuna reducet"—brought forth by love, removed by solicitude, to be restored by fortune.

Reporting the success of the little picture, "round which all the ladies crowd "and crush their skirts," Bachaumont, who found sentiment in it and wit too, called Baudouin "the Greuze of miniaturists." Technically and otherwise the "Memoires secrets" could not suggest a more inappropriate comparison. The same critic maintained that it had been necessary to entrust to a classic quotation the explanations required by a composition more epigrammatic, but less explicit than its immediate neighbour at the same Salon, the "Couché de la mariée" (No. 9), the colours of which, however, suffered somewhat by comparison.

Naturally the insidious question was asked: "Do the two chapters belong to "one story and, if so, which of the two comes first?" Malice and curiosity were satisfied in the year following, when Baudouin kept the Latin pledge taken with the "Fruit of secret love" by exhibiting its *bona fide* companion, "l'Enfant retrouvé," which was never engraved, although no happier sequel could satisfy the growing demand for pairs.

Diderot, who with the enthusiasm of a born casuist delighted in puzzles of right and wrong, did not miss the opportunity of lecturing on the picture he called "A Foundling." He wrote to Falconet in July 1767: "It is no use my giving Baudouin "a piece of my mind, but I can tell you his chief exhibit this year is a midwife's "signboard. The cold composition lacks truth, though the well-proportioned figures "have action. The mother is prettily got up, too much so in fact, considering her "grief and what she has just gone through. The scene should much more appropri-"ately have been laid in a garret, where want might have relegated both parents,

"and be the redeeming feature of the subject itself. This medley of luxury and "poverty is more despicable than cobwebs and rafters. Besides, the whole thing is "dull and grey.

"Baudouin reminds me of the parish priest at Dieppe who chanced to step on "the pedals of an organ. The instrument resounded and the old man exclaimed: "'To play the organ is not so difficult as I thought.' Mr. Baudouin, too, has somehow "put his feet on the pedals, that's all."

For the mere asking one can see at the Louvre the interesting pencil drawing for this composition, covered with alterations, pasted over with "repentances" on bits of paper cut out according to changes, as they occurred to the artist. We could not possibly be brought into closer touch than through this graphic evidence with the laborious endeavours of Baudouin to arrive at the spontaneous attitude of his lively puppets. We see there how he dismissed a first crowded inspiration in favour of second or third thoughts, after having slept perhaps a few nights over a tentative sketch.

The catalogue of the Chardin sale in 1780 contains the following entry: "A *gouache* by Baudouin, son-in-law of Boucher, showing in an untidy room a "woman, a baby, and another woman; on the left, a young man leaning on a table. "The frame bears a Latin inscription: 'fecit amor,' etc." Sale price, 72 livres. That was undoubtedly the first presentment, now lost, of the artist's greatest success up to 1767, and before "le Modèle honnête."

Along with a replica with various alterations of the "Fruit de l'amour," Baron E. de Rothschild possesses the well-preserved, almost unknown *gouache* of "l'Enfant retrouvé," which Baudouin had entitled: "Woman who recognizes her "own Child among the Foundlings at Notre Dame."

Bourcard: "much sought after before letters."

15.

LE GOÛTER

Engraved and printed in colours by Louis Marin Bonnet

Proof before all letters, and lettered state.
Bocher, No. 24.

OF four prints by Bonnet, popularly known as "les quatre repas," one after Baudouin comes second in the natural order of daily meals, being preceded by "le Déjeuner" and followed by "le Dîner" and "le Souper" after Huet. History does not say why Huet omitted to represent the luncheon or how the gap was filled by an artist of such different temperament.

Louis Blanc regards this plate as one of the few illustrations of refined domestic manners in contrast with the frivolous themes favoured by print lovers at the time. Every detail upon it is in keeping with the late Louis XV style, from a negro attendant who reminds one of Zamore, the page of Madame du Barry, to the cross-barred structure for supporting creepers, an out-of-door innovation coinciding with the alterations introduced in the park at Versailles, as laid out by Le Nôtre. The straight lattice work, the fluted pilasters, the volutes or ram's horns on the Ionic capitals, the discreet garlands hanging from them, the ovoidal ornamentation along the top of the trellis, are as many evidences of the evolution of eighteenth-century decoration, which under the influence of Cochin and of Madame de Pompadour dropped the vagaries of curves and scrolls in favour of the simpler and straighter lines about to characterize the Louis XVI style.

The picture is somewhat spoilt by an over-dressed and not well-proportioned little girl who looks as doll-like as the toy baby lying on the ground. Otherwise, in point of composition and technique, "le Goûter" can afford to keep aloof from its three nominal or rather heterogeneous companions.

The proof before letters is from the Bourcard collection, the lettered state from the Halsey collection sold in 1917 in New York.

16.

LE JARDINIER GALANT

Engraved by Isidore Stanislas Helman in 1778

Second finished state, undescribed by Bocher (No. 25).

TWO orthographic mistakes distinguish this state from those mentioned by Bocher: the painter's name spelt "Baudoin" and "quinze vingt" in the address, without a final s.

When the original *gouache*, one of the last works of Baudouin, was exhibited in 1768, Diderot raised objections to the jealous look cast on the lovers by the fair bystander on the steps. "Rose et Colas" (No. 29) had been paired with it, and in 1814, at the Neergaard sale, both pictures together fetched 25 francs.

On the dedication of the print to Mr. de Boullogne, one of the most successful financiers of his day, art patron and good liver,[1] the name of Choffard, who had drawn and engraved his coat of arms, was inscribed next to that of Helman; a new departure in the arbitrary etiquette enforced by publishers who, among the artists' names, were wont to ignore that of the engraver of the *fleuron*, as if Cochin, Choffard, Le Mire, had been mere calligraphists or journeymen.

The second volume of the Annals of Amateurs and Artists for 1860 reproduced "le Jardinier galant" as an advertisement to Ch. Blanc's history of painters.

[1] The fine panels by Lancret at the Decorative Art Museum in Paris came from the residence of Mr. de Boullogne between the Place Vendôme and the Rue des Capucines, now given over to art dealing.

17.

JUSQUES DANS LA MOINDRE CHOSE . . .

Engraved by Louis Joseph Masquelier in 1774

Two impressions: the etching and the third finished state.
Bocher, No. 27.

MASQUELIER (1741-1811), a pupil of Lebas and, as an engraver, the twin brother of Nee, who in the same *atelier* would invariably come to the rescue of damaged plates. To their life-long collaborations we owe the illustrations for the last three volumes of the songs of La Borde begun and interrupted by Moreau le Jeune. Masquelier took charge of the etchings, Nee finished the work, and their delicate art enabled to a certain extent the continuation to pass muster, despite the inferior drawings by Le Bouteux, Le Barbier, and Saint Quentin. We are also indebted to them for the headings, the tail-pieces, and nine exquisite vignettes after Marillier for the second edition of Dorat's Fables.[1]

Masquelier engraved the portrait of La Borde, within a lyre, so rare in the etching state, as well as the ultra rare one of Madame de La Borde, in an interesting condition, of which five impressions are said to exist: a veritable curiosity among bibliophiles.

The subject of this print was taken from the eighth scene of Sedaine's comic opera—"On ne s'avise jamais de tout"—You can never think of everything—set to music by Monsigny and produced at Versailles in 1761. The love-sick heroine repeats a canzonet learnt at school: "The least trifle reminds me of him; when I "scatter a rose, I find his image on every petal. I see him in the clouds, in the "pattern of my work, on each page of my book, I hear him in every sound of the "echo . . ." and so on, until her all-pervading swain was bound to turn up in the flesh.

[1] The division of labour between specialist engravers became so prevalent towards the close of the eighteenth century, that Bernardin de St. Pierre wrote in the preface to the Didot edition of "Paul et Virginie": "Three artists, including the draughtsman, are responsible for the first plate; four and more had "a hand in some of the other illustrations. Nowadays the best engravers maintain that a print turns out "more successfully when its different parts are entrusted to various artists, each of whom excels in his own "branch. Thus an editor first commits the subject to a draughtsman, and then delivers the drawing to an "engraver, who by turn employs one man for the etching, another for the landscape, a third for the figures (?), "until he harmonizes the whole himself. It is for the connoisseur to decide if art benefits by so many "associates or assistants co-operating in one work. . . ."

18.

MARTON

Engraved by Nicolas Ponce in 1776

The etching, unknown to Bocher, No. 31.

A SORT of "cry of Paris" prompted by a popular arietta in the fifth scene of "la Fée Urgèle," or "What ladies like," music by Duny, produced in 1765; "Marton sells nosegays scented and fresh, the ornament of youth; hasten to buy "them; one day may wither them."

The "Journal de Paris" in 1777, eight years after the death of Baudouin, said of the print: "A specimen of Ponce's fine finish; its grace, wit, and charm revive "our regret for the early demise of a painter who was just beginning to enjoy his "success."

The same composition was engraved under the title: "la belle Bouquetière," without the Cupid among the roses; then again imitated in colours as "la jolie Bouquetière"; both adjectives, *belle* and *jolie*, being intended to avoid confusion with an exceedingly rare plate after Boucher, "la Bouquetière galante."

19.

SA TAILLE EST RAVISSANTE

Engraved by Pierre Adrien Lebeau in 1776

Two impressions; second and third finished states.
Bocher, No. 43.

LEBEAU (1748-1818) engraved with a somewhat heavy burin a number of portraits for a collection of contemporary celebrities, published by Rapilly. Of Queen Marie Antoinette alone he reproduced ten different likenesses. His best work is "Sa Taille est ravissante," a subject taken from the opening scene of a comic opera by Favart, produced in 1741: "la Chercheuse d'esprit."[1] The young man, in love with a girl, whose mother is smitten with him, sings: "Her figure "is exquisite; such complexion, such eyes . . . yet her innocence is more lovely "still. . . ." The mother objects, but all ends well.

[1] Essentially an eighteenth-century French state of mind to be in: an impossible one to turn into English. "Seeker after wit" hardly renders it. Its telling illustration may be seen in the Dijon Museum on a simple and virginal bust of exceptional merit, the likeness of Mlle. de Verlamy by Attiret (1728-1804), a pupil of Pigalle. The young lady was a "chercheuse d'esprit" and looked it.

20, 21.

LE LEVER—LA TOILETTE

A pair engraved by Jean-Baptist Massard and Nicolas Ponce in 1771; the borders by Cochin

First finished state and third state.
Bocher, Nos. 29 and 48.

WITH this pair the difference between the first state of the first print and the third of the second is merely nominal, owing to the fact that the two engravers had their own way in preparing each respective plate. Massard's first state of "le Lever," for which he printed two different etchings, bore the tablet with the artists' names on, as the impression before us: while "la Toilette" by Ponce, for which no etching exists, was first printed without any border, then with a white tablet which in the third state was filled with upright lines. In each case, two more states followed.

The *gouache* of "le Lever" was exhibited in 1765; that of "la Toilette," lent to the Louvre in 1776 by Mlle. Testard, the *danseuse*, was sold at her death for 500 livres, together with "le Danger du tête-à-tête" (No. 11). At the Goncourt sale an indian ink sketch touched up with water colours showed Baudouin's first idea for "la Toilette."

The "Mercure de France" in 1772 advertised "two highly finished prints: "one reproducing a young beauty attended by her maids and playing with a cat, "the other a modern Grace of slender figure standing by the dressing table, watched "by an admiring young blood; both subjects most charming, with rich accessories "in the best taste."

Diderot had a word to say about "le Lever": "The maid strives in vain: "those slippers will never fit her mistress's feet. I do not quite take in the salt of it "all; perfectly silly, soft . . . and true."

The decoration of the dressing-room in "la Toilette" is a specimen of rich simplicity: the walls hung with chenille silk held by wreathed rods; taffetas curtains loosely draped over a large window—see the perfect daylight effect—a small revolving armchair "coiffeuse" of the most graceful Louis XV outline: an exquisitely mounted silver mirror, a lyre-shaped clock "cartel," just going to strike three, chiselled by Caffieri: the overdoor by Boucher; on the floor a flowered band-box

for the lady's silk stockings. Baudouin, the most refined up-to-date upholsterer, has thought of every detail without crowding the scene or interfering with our full view of the maid's efforts over her mistress's corset, with eyes intent on strings and hooks, with ears absorbed in the chattering going on, the gossip of yesternight.

Mr. Schefer aptly remarks that "la Toilette" might have been drawn by Moreau le Jeune, so closely does it come to his neat and delicate touch. "As in "art one is bound to be somebody's child, so some of the plates after Baudouin "point to the origin of Moreau's favourite feminine type: the type he was to adopt "for the 'Monument du costume' and the illustrations of J. J. Rousseau."

In the opinion of Delteil, Ponce's somewhat dry interpretation of the "Toilette" is not on a par with the rendering of the "Lever" by Massard, even though the latter, instead of adhering strictly to the spirit of his model, has displayed upon it a surfeit of that refinement which the French call *préciosité*.

❖ ❖ ❖

The ormolu-like borders round both plates call for notice. In the eighteenth century the finest vignettists were not only book illustrators, they could also be illustrators of prints. When those first fruits hardly nipped, the early proofs, were given out, it was often necessary to heighten the attraction of later states with a framework of garlands and a scroll on which a high-sounding dedication would be supported by monograms, coats of arms, and streamers, nay, by airy flights of Loves of fairy-like charm. As this dressing up of elegant scenes had much to say to the general beauty of the effect, it would by no means be entrusted to mere apprentices, but to such artists as Cochin, Choffard, or Gravelot, men who could lavish as much talent and discrimination over minute accessories as the main composition itself had exacted from painter and engraver.

A few trial proofs preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale are the best evidence of such dualism of composition. Inserted with the works of Ponce, a unique impression may be seen there of the border for "la Toilette" designed by Cochin and printed round a blank space. The same was used with minute changes for "le Lever," and when both subjects came to be set within such handsome frames, the name of the great "decorator" disappeared unassumingly, to make place for the signatures of Baudouin, Massard, and Ponce, clothed in feathers not wholly their own. In one of his essays on French engraving, Mr. Courboin writes: "Neither Cochin, nor Moreau, nor St. Aubin, had time to engrave the quantity of "compositions committed to them: they supplied work to a host of craftsmen, "once their fellow apprentices, and then stood aside, as a matter of course, before "the specialist. . . . Knowing that Cochin drew the ornaments round the portrait "of Mgr. de Beauvau by Schmidt as well as the frame of 'la Toilette' by Ponce

"after Baudouin, and that Choffard in his turn composed some capital fleurons, "not wanting in Cupids, we are bound to acknowledge the good nature and true "modesty of both collaborators."

On a reversed copy of "le Lever" by an unknown engraver, the expression of the faces has been altered.

22-25.

LES HEURES DU JOUR

Engraved by Emmanuel Jean Nepomucène de Ghendt

First states.
Bocher, Nos. 32, 33, 35, 46.

EXCEPT in this famous set, where his work equals that on the finest engravings of the time, de GHENDT (1738-1815), the pupil of Lebas's pupil, Aliamet, confined himself to vignettes. Having attracted attention with the frontispiece for "les Sens"—not the poem of du Rosoi—he joined the brilliant group engaged on Bret's illustrated edition of Molière which appeared in 1773. Some miracles of microscopic delicacy in the fables of Dorat and the dainty title-page of the "Héloïse" of 1788-93 bear his signature.

The critic who wonders at the recondite meaning of the words "vier, vyte, "derde, fesde" minutely etched above the border, on the right of every one of these four plates, forgets that de Ghendt was Flemish, and might be at liberty to write numbers in his native language. On the impressions before us the white tablet is merely outlined; the second print is the rarest of the set.

Few painters, except on commission, choose to paint hypocritical subjects. At a time when small companion pictures, even triplets and quadruplets, four ages, four seasons, four continents, were in demand for decorative purposes, Lancret and Boucher, each according to his bent, lent colour and form to fanciful impersonations of a day's idle hours with more grace than strenuousness of conception. The first gave to the playful avocations of his little figures a plausible, almost domesticated object; the second, born limner of the Graces, scene-man of Louis XV eclogues, wrapped the inner voluptuousness of his compositions within the travesty of rural life and the compliance of draperies. Each in his own way frivolous but poetically respectable.

At Baudoin's mental reservations with the same but more earthly allegories, the less that is hinted the better. The leading actress in his four-act play—no youngsters admitted—after spending the morning in bed, has a nap in the afternoon, takes a bath in the evening; at last, by way of killing time, she goes out at night to meet a friend in the park. We do not possess Diderot's estimate of the lady's lost opportunities.

Baudouin's sketch for "le Matin," slyly entitled by him "The Tutor," is described by the Goncourts, who owned it, as the artist's finest water-colour effect, as vaporous as a cloud.

26.

MARCHEZ TOUT DOUX, PARLEZ TOUT BAS

Engraved by Pierre Philippe Choffard in 1782

Proof.
Coat of arms of His Highness the Prince de Ligne.
Bocher, No. 30.

THE above title, with its pretty literary turn, has been suggested tentatively by Bocher owing to the following rambling advertisement in the "Journal de Paris" of November 1782, when the print was issued to the trade: "Contrary to "custom, this engraving bears no title. As the subject recalls a stanza of the song "quoted in the masterpiece of an unknown author, *marchez tout doux, parlez tout "bas,* it might be named 'l'Eveillée du matin,'—early awakening. It makes up a set "of four after the set of pictures exhibited by the same painter at the Salons of "1765 and 1767. This is numbered three: the others are out already. Numbers "one and four were advertised in the 'Mercure' of April 1768: number two, the "'Jardinier galant' was engraved by Helman. Choffard's latest work is harmonious "and effective, its touch being particularly spirited. To be had at his new address, "not at the 'Quinze-vingts,' but on the 'Quai et maison neuve des Théatins.'"

Bocher has unearthed the amatory song from which Baudouin derived apparently the idea of this little scene. It is included in a rare little book well known to bibliophiles: "Le chef d'œuvre d'un inconnu," by Doctor Matanasius, together with a letter to the Duke of D . . . and a dissertation on Homer and on Chapelain. Cathos, the winsome shepherdess, hearing the lark at the break of day, begs Colin to withdraw without noise, or else her father will make short work of it:

J'entends l'alouette qui chante
au point du jour:
amant, si vous êtes honnête,
retirez vous.
Marchez tout doux, parlez tout bas,
mon doux ami;
car si mon Papa vous entend,
morte je suis.

According to Portalis and Beraldi this successful interpretation of a risky subject shows Choffard on a par with de Launay and Simonet. Whoever proposed as another suitable title "la Fille mal gardée," has encroached upon the rights of the "Chansons de la Borde," illustrated by Moreau le Jeune.

LE MODÈLE HONNÊTE

By Moreau le Jeune and Simonet. After P. A. Baudouin

27.

LE MODÈLE HONNÊTE

Etched by Moreau le Jeune in 1770, finished by Jean Baptiste Simonet

Three impressions: the etching, the finished state, and the third state.
Bocher, No. 34 under Baudouin and No. 239 under Moreau le Jeune.

BESIDES the etching, which bears the name of Moreau le Jeune and the date 1770 in scratched letters, there are four states of this print, issued in 1772:

1. Before letters.

2. With the artists' names only.

3. With the names of Baudouin and Simonet and the title in open block capitals.

4. With the joint names of Moreau and Simonet; with the dedication to Count Strogonoff and his coat of arms, drawn and engraved by Moreau.

The price of eight livres was charged for the latter state; the artists had certain rights over proof impressions, but the etching was not offered for sale.

This honest, this beautiful model, treated with the most exquisite art it is possible to imagine, was the swan song of Baudouin, the supreme evidence of his undisguised appeals to the evergreen inventiveness of his father-in-law, who suggested the composition, admirably set, faultlessly balanced, within that studied profusion of details—*fouillis* it was called—which so delighted his contemporaries. On the radiant *gouache* was a reflection of "Diana bathing," Boucher's *chef-d'œuvre* as an easel picture, of the modelling of that lovely form, of an attitude as elegant and pure as that of a chaste young goddess, undraped—not undressed.

On seeing at the Salon of 1769 this "Modèle"—a moral tale by antiphrasis—Diderot, to whom the King's first painter was a red rag, seized at once upon a family likeness: "Indeed, Mr. Baudouin, you overstep the mark, in copying the most "dangerous of Masters. While your drawing falls short of his, your colours are as "crude, and you treat flesh like a crimson curtain. Yet this model, honest, if you "like, belongs in one respect to you more than to your relative by marriage; there "seems to be some propriety about it, of which your father-in-law could never be "guilty. At last you are apparently in pursuit of the very quality he always ignored: "expression."

But soon after, as if even ironical praise scalded his quill, Diderot fastened an

offensive interpretation upon the subject: "Our friend Baudouin is not worth much; "what else could you expect of him?"

The judgement is unfair; Baudouin's heroes may be merely happy-go-lucky mortals, but their original variety of types, superior in that respect to Boucher, their genuine animation, their grace and spirit, denote faculties of observation which go far to atone for forwardness of brush. However often he may have overlooked the precepts of morality, Baudouin never sinned against artistic conventions.

The *gouache* was eagerly discussed. Even Bachaumont, conciliatory as he was, had to split straws and attribute motives: "In spite of faults of common sense— "the most uncommon sense of all—private viewers at the Salon have been inordin- "ately taken with this luscious trifle, or were they merely trying to solve a riddle? "Ever since he puzzled the public with his 'Fruit of Secret Love' [No. 14], "Baudouin injects into his compositions too much wit, and becomes obscure. Once "again, by way of elucidation, he must resort to a classic quotation carved on the "frame, 'quid non cogit Egestas?'—to what lengths are we not driven by want? "Now, I have my own queries too; first, how is one to conciliate the model's "apparent reluctance with the painting shown on the canvas, which must have "already taken several sittings? Second, what part does the old woman act? Is she "the mother, anxious to drag her daughter away, or what? Which of the two women "does the Latin quotation concern, the young, the old, or both?"

If, even in the days of Louis XV, to the pure-minded most works of art seemed pure, the prejudiced and the mischievous were bound to weave immoral reticences around them. Baudouin may not have been overburdened with scruples, yet his aesthetic scent could not miss a redeeming opportunity of surrounding modesty with a genuine halo. As to the point of the composition there cannot be two interpretations. The model feels a genuine repugnance to sitting thus disrobed before the man who, in his turn, as she instinctively raises her arm to hide her blushes, struck by the sculptural beauty of a spontaneous gesture such as Falconet or Clodion might envy, raises his hands, exclaiming: "Do not move, that I may "draw you"; then turning to her mother: "Never mind the Venus on my picture; "the girl has taken a pose into which I may never set her again. Hold her as she "is now." Whereupon the chaperon assists her daughter's modesty into complying with the painter's entreaty. Art may yet be richer by a self-prompted attitude; let studio gossips be silenced, all far-fetched readings discarded. Nothing wrong is about to happen; the painter is as honest as his hired model.

The scene presents another rare attraction; it lets us for once into a fashionable *atelier* of the time, a home of *genre* pictures. No cold northern light here, no sternness, no bare walls. How far removed this apartment from the ascetic garret where Chardin's "Student of Drawing" (No. 70), shivering by an old-fashioned *brasero*, was left to copy nature from marble, the quintessence of artistic austerity. Other times, other surroundings. A studio, as Baudouin understood it, must be fit to

nestle more than one passing fancy beneath delicately carved eaves. Through wide bays a tepid sun plays on panels hung with paintings, on roses dipped in a Sèvres bowl mounted by Gouthière, on a fancy cabinet by Riesener, on the gilt sofa where a model in the flesh, not always an honest one, is enthroned. Surely such luxurious premises were devised to combine pleasure with work, to let life's candle burn away at both ends.[1]

Withdrawn at 1,750 livres at the sale of a famous *danseuse*, Mlle. Testard, in 1776, then sold for 100 livres four years later at the Chardin sale, the original *gouache*, much damaged through "rehandling," is now jealously guarded by Mr. Groult.

Enchanted with the print of his "Couché de la mariée," wondering whether such clever reproductions in popular form would not be preferable even to the originals, and in the end pay better, Baudouin entrusted his new *gouache* to the same engravers. Moreau le Jeune was to attend to the etching, which the burin of Simonet was to finish.[2] Technically, the result of the signal collaboration surpassed the previous one; but Baudouin, exhausted by pleasure and over-work, did not live to see it. He died in 1769; the exquisite, the luminous plate was only finished in 1770. The "Mercure de France" advertised it: "Two joint interpreters have fully entered "into the delicate spirit of the picture and done justice to the reluctance of a girl "driven by want to sit as model in a studio. The accessories have been rendered "with a skill which is sure to attract connoisseurs, and to revive before them the last "success of poor Baudouin, whom Boucher has so closely followed to the great "beyond."

In his recent contribution to the biography and criticism of Moreau le Jeune, Mr. Schefer, whose text is as genial as the illustrations are steely, depreciates "le Modèle": "One of those questionable subjects with a false show of modesty such "as Baudouin delighted in." And again: "The prints of two spirited *gouaches*, 'le "Coucher,' 'le Modèle,' may be considered as the artist's *début*, and the revelation "of his personal qualities; but as the second does not pertain to the scenes which "Moreau would handle by choice, it does not present the astonishing virtuosity of "its companion, 'le Couché' [why companion?], and is merely a good craftsman's "work, finished by Simonet."

Of more purport is the following remark: "A distinct reminiscence of 'le Modèle "honnête' may be found in the 'Sicilien ou l'Amour peintre' among Moreau's "illustrations issued three years later for Bret's edition of Molière. The general "composition is pretty much the same; the same above all is the attitude of the "painter viewed from the back, as he turns round and shows his palette. Such a "loan from another artist is worthy of notice, as there is hardly another similar "instance in the whole work of Moreau. Moreau adhered to the upright French "tradition and, while coming under the influence of Vernet, Boucher, and Baudouin, "rather than copying them he would repeat himself occasionally."

A peculiar interest attaches to the small composition quoted by Mr. Schefer, for the head of Adraste, represented in the act of painting the portrait of Isidora, is the likeness of Moreau himself, as stated in the handwriting of Mme. C. Vernet, his daughter, under the vignette at the Bibliothèque Nationale. The scene is not laid in a studio, but in the stately hall of an Italian palace.

Basan inserted a reproduction of the "Modèle" in his selection of one hundred prints after Dutch and French Masters, published in 1779. Provot engraved two imitations of it in a rather indelicate spirit, as implied by the new title, "A Well-"disposed model."

[1] Owing to an ever-growing quest of prettiness and grace, as makeshifts for beauty, the artistic and Bohemian Paris of Louis XV must have swarmed with "models" for hire. The immortality which canvases have bestowed upon them will ever be anonymous, since the memoirs of the time, newsy and gossipy as they were, do not record their names. Cochin's admirable drawing of the "Concours pour le prix de l'étude des têtes et de l'expression," engraved by Flipart, showing a very much dressed and even crowned Mlle. Clairon, posing for the expressive head, is of too solemn a character to typify the average member of a profession of which the father of a pupil of Doyen expressed in his letters so great a fear on account of the morals of his son.

But there is one exception to this blank. Boucher confessed to Sir Joshua Reynolds that if in his long career he could do at last without a model, it was owing to his having once discovered and monopolized the ideal sitter for his goddesses, nymphs, and minor feminine subjects: a girl who had intelligently posed for him during four years and taught him more about plastics than he ever learnt before. "Now," he added, "I still carry young Morfil in my old eyes." Miss Murphy he meant, whose bright, pert, little face and dimply form—a chubby *academy* in French studio parlance—Demarteau has made popular on many of his studies after the Master.

The best known artists' models about the middle of the eighteenth century in Paris were three sisters, three Graces: Brigitte, Victoire, and Louise, known as Morphise I, II, and III, said to be descended from the O'Murphy of Ballina, who emigrated to France under James I. The eldest held a regular appointment at the Academy of Painting; the second sat to Pigalle; Marie-Louise (1737-1814), the youngest of the trio, a lovely child, utterly uneducated, was first brought through tortuous ways to the notice of Madame de Pompadour, and recommended by her to Boucher, then at the zenith of success, who first employed her in 1750. According to the Memoirs of d'Argenson she entered the Parc aux Cerfs in 1753. She had feet so perfectly and delicately shaped that a mould of them was taken for the Sèvres factory. In 1755 she married Major, afterwards General Beaufranchet, who was killed at Rossbach. Their son was in turn a General under Bonaparte. Her second husband, Le Normant, a Treasury clerk, died in 1783. The third was Dumont, a Deputy at the Convention, who divorced her in 1799. Nothing is known of a child she had by Louis XV.

[2] The English author of a preface to "French Line Engravings of the late XVIIIth Century" (London, 1910), who will not assign to Moreau the chief credit for the "Couché de la mariée," applies the same remark to the "Modèle honnête": "A print deserving of some attention, though by no means to be placed "in the first rank of the engravings of the period." Although tastes are not to be disputed even when in contradiction with the general consent of connoisseurs, the authority of French critics should not be disregarded in the classification of this plate and of the "Couché," both entered by Bocher among the works of Moreau le Jeune.

28.

LE RENDEZ-VOUS

Engraved by Louis Marin Bonnet in 1771; printed in colours

Second state.
Bocher, No. 41.

STIMULATED by the popular interest in scientific questions under the influence of the Encyclopædists through the second half of the eighteenth century, engravers were in eager pursuit of new processes to arrive at the reproduction of colours on prints. The part played by BONNET (1743-1793) in a development so detrimental to the academic burin is described as follows by Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold, who survey the conditions of the craft when Debucourt was about to appear on the scene:

"Together with Demarteau Jr. and Cl. Briceau, to quote only the leaders, "Bonnet took up and carried on the efforts of Jean Ch. François, who in 1757 had "attracted considerable attention to his imitations of chalk drawings and was "followed closely by Gilles Demarteau.[1] But already the palmy days of the "*sanguine* were over, and the rendering of broadly handled crayons by means "of a roulette, which at first sight proved to be deceptive, evolved towards stipple "as the best mode of imparting characteristic softness and indefiniteness to a plate "according to the technique of sixteenth-century goldsmiths and almost with the "same tools. Favoured by the ingenious Bonnet and by Louis Legrand, his "brother-in-law, this so-called English manner became all the rage. . . .

"The scientific theory of colour printing by means of three primary inks, "yellow, red, and blue, had been discovered and applied in Holland since 1710 by "J. Chr. Le Blon, a painter of French origin, hailing from Frankfort, whose 'Art "'of printing pictures' required no more than three plates roughened into a burr by "the rocking tool and worked with the scraper. Each bore one ink and the "successive superimposition of the three gave the subject in its outline and colours. "Thoroughly confirmed by the XXth century, though contrary to Newton's "ideas, this genial invention was so much in advance of the time that not even "Mariette seems to have appreciated it, and on the death of Le Blon in 1741 the "trichromatic process fell into oblivion, until J. Gautier Dagoty, a charlatan rather "than an artist, distorted its principle by adding to the three monochrome plates "a black one to supply the outline.

"Bonnet had naturally been led to the particular kind of *en teinte* or mezzotinto "engraving on metal, printed in colours from several plates, by his own imitations "of drawings and pastels. In the latter style everyone knows his extraordinary "head of Flora after Boucher"—an amplified application of Demarteau's process into which eight plates were combined, as set forth in a rare pamphlet, "Le pastel en "gravure inventé et executé par Louis Bonnet en 1769," of which the best illustration may be seen at the Arsenal Library in Paris on eight states of the Flora showing the successive stages of the impressions in colours (No. 56A).

"While therefore each well gauged copperplate would merely be laid within "the guide lines of the first, to Bonnet was due the notion of fitting one plate firmly "over the other by means of keys;[2] a simple operation in theory, a delicate one in "practice. In 1780 his finest colour-prints were a thing of the past: he had "given the measure of his skill and paved the way for his successors with many a "domestic or amorous subject after Huet, Le Prince, and others, engraved in a "mixed manner which, having sprung from the reproduction of pencil strokes,[3] led "to stipple. And now Bonnet forsook the practice of his craft to devote himself to "trade."

He knew how to attract foreigners to his *magasin Anglais* in the Rue Gallande, "carriage entrance between a chandler and a box maker," or later on to Rue St. Jacques. The printed catalogue of his stock-in-trade—a bibliographic rarity—mentions 1,054 of his own plates, besides a choice of lively compositions, contemporary portraits, revolutionary pictures, and constantly renovated novelties. Many facsimiles of Boucher's sketches upon which the grain, the bloom, and actually the dust of the pastel seemed palpable, formed a standing speciality of that fashionable shop and were as successful as they proved to be least apt to stand friction or wear and tear.

The frequent mention, "B. direxit," shows that far from working alone, Bonnet had an *atelier* where subordinate engravers turned out showy prints savouring of articles of Paris for export, most of them to be disposed of in London by an active art agent named Vivares. Three to nine livres was the average price: as much as twelve being charged for subjects bearing English titles, regardless of the orthography, "woman ta-King coffee" for example, and surrounded by gilded borders of which Bonnet could in truth claim the invention, even though gilt applied to engraving be the record of bad taste. He reserved for the latter the signature "L. Marin," or the anagram "Tennob."

The inscription under the "Rendez-vous" after Baudouin asserts a favourite boast: "Fifth plate engraved as a pastel by L. Bonnet, sole inventor of a process "submitted in 1769 by the Mqs. of Marigny to His Majesty, who honoured it with "his approval." The syntax of the sentence in French is as inaccurate as was the claim of discovery arrogated to an improvement of the improvements already wrought by Demarteau on an imitative method which Bonnet and his assistants

popularized and made somewhat cruder, years before Bartolozzi became the champion of simplified engraving.[4]

Bourcard refers to this print as one so rare that he has never seen it in a sufficiently good condition to describe it. The heads of the loving couple are similar to those of "les Soins tardifs" (No. 31).

[1] The earliest facsimiles of crayons bear the dates 1736-7 and the signature of Arthur POND, an Englishman who engraved Watteau's caricature of Dr. Misaubin. Not until 1740 did François try his hand at this particular style.

[2] The four black dots often noticeable across the margins of a print are traces left by the perforating keys or screws adopted by Bonnet.

[3] Facsimiles of crayons proceeded from the principle that a pencil stroke can be decomposed in an infinity of small dots determined by the grain of the paper.

[4] Until in recent years Mr. Fenaille brought about a revival of interest in the works of Demarteau and Bonnet, their imitations of pastels and drawings were looked upon by nineteenth century collectors as counterfeits of valuable originals, sham Bouchers "made to sell" under glass, not *bona fide* engravings. Thus Mr. Christophle drew against them the fastidious line of his choice.

29.

ROSE ET COLAS

Engraved by Jean-Baptiste Simonet

Two impressions: the first finished state and the second state unknown to Bocher, No. 42.
The monogram of Prault, King's printer, on the *fleuron*.

THE biography of SIMONET (1742-18—?), an excellent pupil of Lebas, is scanty. While doing capital work for book illustrators, he was most successful with his plates after Baudouin, handled according to the traditions of a remarkable school. Print lovers remember him chiefly on account of a large number of compositions—more than one hundred and fifty of them—entrusted to his clear burin by Moreau le Jeune ever since 1767 and throughout the course of half a century. Without ever altering a lock of hair, or the leaf of a tree, he adhered closely to the gradual evolution of the style of his favourite patron and model.

The "Couché de la mariée" and the "Modèle honnête" (Nos. 9 and 27) prepared by Moreau and finished by Simonet with a delicacy of touch that left the Master's own etchings almost transparent, bear witness to the sudden apogee of a brilliant collaboration. Three vignettes, "Léontine, Chimène, Œdipe," interpreted by Simonet at seventy-three years of age for Renouard's edition of Corneille, mark the dull swan song of a great draughtsman.

According to Bocher, the second finished state of this engraving shows the monogram, the title, the artists' names, and the address of Basan, while we have here, besides the first finished state, an undescribed impression with the title in open block letters, without address.

The subject of "Rose et Colas" was taken from a play by Sedaine and Monsigny, produced in 1764, the scene being laid in a farm, where Colas, who naturally loves Rose, sang: "Here it is that Rose breathes. . . . If I were king, my "kingdom I would give for her cottage. To sigh would be a sweet sorrow, if only "Rose would sigh with me." The arietta, though not particularly strenuous, became exceedingly popular.

Without any apparent motive and even though their sizes differ, this print and the "Soirée des Thuileries" were issued as a pair—regardless of the susceptibilities of Rose.

30.

LA SENTINELLE EN DÉFAUT

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay in 1771

Two impressions: the etching and the first state.
Coat of arms of the Duke of Zwei-Brücken.
Bocher, No. 44.

THE subject is a modified replica of "les Soins tardifs" (No. 31). De Launay reproduced it over again in stipple within an oval, as a companion to "l'Épouse indiscrète" (No. 13) over the same dedication to the reigning German princelet, Christian IV, Duke of Zwei-Brücken, Prince Palatine of the Rhine, patron of the arts, probably partial to erotic pictures, fond as he was of visiting Paris incognito.[1]

The stamp on the back of the etching is that of the Louis Galichon collection, sold at auction in 1895.

[1] Charles Augustus, Duke of Deux-Ponts or Herzog Karl of Zwei-Brücken, to mention the title by which he is familiar in German history, was the heir presumptive of Charles Theodore, the easy-going, purchasable Palatinate Elector who, having no legitimate heir, was unmindful of the future Charles Augustus. When Austrian troops marched to take possession of a share of Bavaria, the Empress Maria Theresa found to her consternation that Frederick the Great had taken measures with the Duke of Deux-Ponts and was prepared to press his claims to an heritage which would otherwise have passed from him.

The estates of the House of Deux-Ponts were eventually divided between Bavaria, Saxe-Coburg, and Hesse.

31.

LES SOINS TARDIFS

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

First finished state.
Bocher, No. 45.

On the first state of this print, the tablet formed by ornamented circles differs from that on lettered impressions, and bears no coat of arms. On either side are the artists' names.

The original picture, intended as a companion to the "Carquois Epuisé," was dedicated to the Prince de Guéménée, as if to teach him that country and town morals were much about the same, or that, in some cases, late is no better than never. In de Launay's own list of works, the "Carquois épuisé" and the "Soins" form a double pair with the "Heureux moment" after Lavreince and the "Complaisance maternelle" after Freudenberger (Nos. 4, 254, 172).

Diderot saw "les Soins" in 1767, and wrote: "The Salon this year shows no "end of fire screens, with the exception of a luminous *gouache* which might be taken "for an oil painting. As you see, I am fair, and wish for nothing better than to "praise that jolly good fellow, Baudouin. . . . On second thoughts, however, I must "withdraw what I said. Very nicely contrived, but no truth about it, no taste; "heaps of contradictions on a small space. The subject, the people, and their stable "sicken me as a concoction of Fontenelle and Theocritus,[1] a bad imitation of the "genuine article, the outcome of some degenerate mind. Baudouin takes Boucher's "sham Graces to a pig-sty, or turns a boudoir into a house of assignation. Of "proprieties he has no notion; he ignores what we all know by instinct without "being taught: he lacks tact. I feel sorry for the man: I like him."

According to the Goncourts the *gouache* of "les Soins," though not intact, is one of the five undoubted originals by Baudouin in existence: "its water-colours "betray the most successful effort to convey the effect of oils."

An inferior reproduction of the print appeared almost simultaneously in Germany. De Launay was hard to beat.

The mark of the Dreux collection is on the back of this impression.

[1] Theocritus (third century B.C.), the creator of idyllic poetry, sang the rustic pleasure of peasants: a Greek Robert Burns.

Fontenelle (1657-1757), a voluminous writer, whose pastoral rhymes are pretty patterns of affectation.

32.

LA SOIRÉE DES THUILERIES[1]

Engraved by Jean-Baptiste Simonet

Two impressions: the etching and the first finished state.
Bocher, No. 47.

THE lasting superiority of fine prints over the fleeting mediums of a *gouache* is evidenced by the original of this "Soirée," now an original but in name. The gentleman's hand holding a purse and the lady's *suède* gloves are all that remain of Baudouin's own work on the surface. A scrupulous restorer must have known better, when he had his way over the rest, and the subdued colouring, once "a feat of whispering" as a night effect, was ruined.

It would be useless to analyse the composition closely. Better do as the moon does, who has just asked a cloud to veil her face. Even the little dog objects.

[1] The palace of the Thuileries (the *h* dropped at the Revolution), set on fire in 1871, had been built in 1564 on the site of a tile field; hence its name from "Thuile." Louis XIV abandoned it in favour of Versailles, and the public ever since has frequented its gardens.

33.

LE LÉGER VÊTEMENT

Engraved by Juste Chevillet in 1779

First state.
Bocher, No. 28.

Chevillet (1729-1790), who had come from Frankfort-on-Oder to study under Wille, the providence of German artists in Paris, became his brother-in-law. The great burinist praises in his journal the "honest execution" of Chevillet and his successful rendering of Chardin's witty countenance after the master's own portrait in pastels. Probably because he principally engraved the minor Dutch painters his work had a metallic appearance, lacking the French transparency which Wille himself had assimilated.

Janinet reproduced the same subject in colours under the name of "Agréable Négligé" within a larger oval, imitating marble. A small reversed replica of it was published as "la jeune Flore" after "Baudouien."

JACQUES-ANTOINE BEAUFORT

34, 35.

DIANE AU BAIN—VÉNUS AU BAIN

Engraved and printed in colours by Louis Marin Bonnet

Second states.

OF J. A. BEAUFORT (1721-1784) the dictionary of Benezit merely says that he was received at the Academy in 1771 as a painter of historical subjects, the originals of the pair before us being quoted among his works.

Beraldi explains the mention "Bonnet direxit," not "sculpsit," under both prints with the well-known fact that the fashionable *magasin Anglais* of the Rue St. Jacques was practically a workshop where several engravers of unequal merit, employed in a subordinate capacity, produced the majority of the 1,054 plates catalogued by Bonnet under his own name: "Diane au bain" and "Vénus au bain" bearing respectively Nos. 733 and 521.

Apart from the questionable merit of a stipple in colour having no relation with the genuine process of Janinet and Debucourt, and about which there was little illusion, as representative a collection as this is could not overlook one or two specimens of that wholesale collaboration of apprentices supervised by Bonnet and Legrand, his brother-in-law and right hand, who turned out some popular prints and in the end brought discredit upon an attractive and decorative craft.

NICOLAS BERTIN

36.

LA GAIETÉ DE SILÈNE

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

Proof.

AFTER studying under Juvenet and being an apprentice in the *atelier* of Bon Boullogne; after showing in his "Vertumnus and Pomona" at the Palais Royal the gifts of a draughtsman and a colourist, Nicolas BERTIN (1668-1736) worked for Louis XIV at Meudon and Trianon without ever incurring that excessive emphasis which often marred the style of his fellow artists.

To the statement in the "Abridged lives of Painters" by the Abbé de Fontenay that "although Bertin's touch was vigorous and firm, and he styled "himself an historical painter, he succeeded best with cabinet pictures," posterity might add that he succeeded better still with Louis Tocqué, the pupil through whom he proved himself to have been a forerunner of the eighteenth-century School. A sketch for his altar-piece at St. Germain des Prés is the only work of Bertin at the Louvre.

There is a god for drunkards, said a French wit. The ancients who chaffed less and were more practical took the precaution of placing themselves under the protection of a series of divinities, among whom Dionysius, son of Zeus and Semele, was the chief patron of intemperate aristocrats, while his tutor Silenus, a satyr of lowlier birth, the offspring of Hermes and a nymph, favoured the non-governing classes in their ebriety. Not always amiable in his cups, Dionysius kept in his train a tiger or two; Silenus, however, was the merriest of drinkers, his wide countenance bursting with laughter, whilst his rubicund nose bore witness to the placidity of his disposition. His attributes were an ivy crown, a wine skin, the thyrsus, and occasionally a panther. Like Proteus he would only display the gifts of prophecy on compulsion; if caught in a state of intoxication and bound with chains of flowers, he foretold the future and sang.

In art Rubens' picture of Silenus, now at Munich, stands out as a masterpiece of bacchic expression. Obviously Bertin had its principal group before his mind's eyes when, on a miniature writ large, he drew without plagiarism two Bacchantes propping up complacently the majesty of this Olympic buffoon.

The print, usually paired with the "Poète Anacréon" after Baudouin, is one of a set of fourteen more or less rustic subjects engraved with the burin by de Launay after a groundwork of etching within such wonderful festoons of reeds and berries, leaves and flowers, that the eye wanders from each scene to the surrounding ornaments and admiration hesitates to declare its preference between the masterly interpretation of the pictures, and the corresponding oval borders, gems of the decorative art, attributed to Choffard. The set comprises the following: five after Fragonard, "le petit Prédicateur," "Dites donc s'il vous plaît," "l'Éducation fait tout," "les Baignets," "l'Heureuse fécondité"; two after Freudenberger, "la Gaieté conjugale," "la Félicité villageoise"; one after Baudouin, "le Poète Anacréon"; one after Bertin, "la Gaieté de Silène"; one after Aubry, "l'Abus de la Crédulité"; one after Van Gorp, "C'est Papa"; one after Mlle. Gérard, "les Regrets mérités" (Nos. 161-5, 173). Inserted under the "Silène" is a handsome *fleuron*, in the style of a classic intaglio.

"Silenus's march supported by Fauns" is another print of a similar character by de Launay after Rubens.

JEAN JOSEPH BASTIER DE BETZ

37.

LA PROMENADE AU JARDIN TURC

Engraved by Jean Pierre Marie Jazet; printed in colours

Only state.

BENEZIT'S notice on JAZET (1788-1871), the nephew, factotum, and best pupil of Debucourt, begins by crediting him with an uncommon goodness of heart and ends by debiting him with a few uncommonly weak plates turned out at the time when he was assisted by his two sons. Through unremitting labour he managed as a young man to support his mother, and in mature years to pay his uncle's debts. Just as Debucourt in his third manner had made a speciality of sporting prints after Carle Vernet, Jazet became the favourite interpreter of similar subjects by Horace Vernet, helping him to popularize the military feats of the first Empire. Not very intelligibly, Benezit adds that his success in improving the process of aquatint "prejudiced the expressiveness of his works." Queen Elizabeth's death, after a picture by Delaroche which had taken Paris by storm, was considered one of his finest engravings. There is no arguing on questions of taste.

The controversy raised in the eighties round the possible painter of the quaint and characteristic view of old Paris before us was settled by Mr. M. Fenaille in 1893, just as Bourcard had advanced the opinion that no conclusive evidence would ever be obtained. Noticing on the face of the print the mention "dep. à la dir. "gen. de la Lib.," the learned iconographist ascertained that the initials "J. J. de Bz" inscribed after the word *dessiné* were those of Jean Joseph Bastier DE BETZ (1780-1845), a stockbroker turned landscape painter, thanks to the tuition of Watelet, and an Academy medallist of 1824, under whose name the engraving had actually been entered at the Bibliothèque Nationale. A vague correlation previously established between that signature, minus the final *z*, and J. J. de Boissieu, another mannered landscapist and etcher, a friend of Wille, was thus eliminated.

That easy-going but obstinate critics preferred nevertheless to cling to a more ambitious paternity for this "Promenade" is evidenced by Bourcard himself. Some-

LA PROMENADE AU JARDIN TURC

By J. P. M. Jazet. After J. J. B. De Betz

La promenade du Jardin Turc

how the "de Bz" standing for the draughtsman's name had supported for a time the desultory attribution of this composition to "de Bucourt," not only because of the master's relationship with the engraver, but above all owing to a remote connection between the good intentions or the spirit of the subject and the famous Palais Royal walks. The main argument, now utterly discarded, was that just as the "Promenade du Jardin" (No. 94) might have been drawn by a Debucourt in his teens, in the same way or by contrast this fourth "Promenade" could be entered among his works, after Frascati (No. 100), after "Modes et Manières du Jour" (Nos. 101-104), after several sporting prints, as the swan song of a great artist in his dotage. When it was shown that the "Promenade du Jardin" was due to Desrais, Bourcard still hesitated for the "Jardin Turc" between Desrais and Debucourt, especially as the son of Jazet had told him he remembered seeing in his father's portfolio an etching of that print, a circumstance which would have no bearing on the painter's identity, while that of the engraver was never in doubt.

Looking back at the comparatively recent date of the death of old Jazet, the last link with eighteenth-century burinists, one might wonder that under the second Empire no collector should have thought of ascertaining the circumstances of the case; were it not that to collect prints with sedulous discrimination and to ascertain their artists' names beyond the pale of supposition are accomplishments developed after the first Franco-German war. Bourcard closes the disquisition on Jazet's work with a verdict of "much sought after."

A favourite resort of Parisians under Louis XVI, Napoleon I, and the Restoration, less fashionable than Frascati, but more popular on account of its terrace, the Turkish garden, buildings, and kiosks, long since pulled down, have been merged into the renovated Boulevard du Temple, leading to the Place de la Republique in the Marais quarter, a centre of theatres and amusements before the Revolution, where Curtius first exhibited his waxworks and Count d'Artois had a private racquet court. The present premises of Bonvalot's restaurant at No. 29 occupy a portion of the old Jardin Turc, the name of which was written in Gothic characters on the main gate, as the print shows. Baby carriages were one of the domestic attractions of the establishment.

From the building opposite, in July 1835, Fieschi's infernal machine killed Marshal Mortier and seventeen other persons escorting King Louis Philippe and three of his sons, who escaped unhurt.

LOUIS LÉOPOLD BOILLY

(1761-1845)

DRAWING was uprightness to him: no symbols, no thoughts from the back of his head, no probing into the far beyond ever troubled BOILLY. Through his fine collection of minor Dutch masters he became imbued with the colours of Terburg, Mieris, and Metsu, with their modelling, their rendering of silks and satins. For expressiveness and wit he remained a Parisian. His powers of observation were confined to familiar scenes treated with a fidelity that brings his work in close relation with the anecdotic history of the Revolution and the Directoire, but not too far from the attractiveness of a school which had been the glory of an older regimen. Boilly has permanently set down the type, the manners, and deportment that went with the dress of free citizens, of *incroyables* and *merveilleuses*; his jolly and rowdy characters might have acclaimed in turn Robespierre, Bonaparte, and Louis XVIII.

At a time when amateurs were inactive and liberal professions less remunerative than liberal opinions, Boilly discovered a source of profit in the prints after his graceful pictures, *galantes* without being broad; but the discovery was nearly responsible for his falling a victim to Republican morality in 1794. Denounced for the licentiousness of compositions which must be burnt under the tree of liberty, Boilly would have been lost, but for a warning which gave him time to destroy bundles of boudoir subjects and to obtain absolution with a sketch for the Triumph of that bloodthirsty leader, Marat.

Engravers, he declared, were liable for the wrong meaning attributed to small canvases which thereafter would cope with the purity of the times. His activity now turned to portraits, mostly sketches, of which he drew close upon five thousand; a march past of all conditions of bourgeois, politicians, nonentities, and celebrities under six different forms of government; but Boilly remained chiefly himself in such pictures as brought down upon him thunderbolts from the Committee of Public Safety.

The vogue of democratic subjects created a demand for the reproduction of his compositions at a time when the French school of engraving was already on the decline, owing to the expeditious methods employed to deal with work undertaken at low prices. Nevertheless Boilly, whose technique lent itself to the brilliant effects obtained by colour printing, found successful interpreters in such craftsmen who had kept up a great tradition as Petit, Tresca, Chaponnier, and Legrand.

A good optician, he expected to build a fortune with an invention for lighting up pictures by night. Of his elaborate experiments nothing has remained.

It is a singular coincidence that Boilly should be best seen at the Museum at Lille which owes its treasures—a famous Renaissance wax bust among them—to Wicar, the painter, the very man who denounced Boilly before the Republican Society of Arts and demanded his imprisonment.

LA COCARDE NATIONALE

By A. C. S. Legrand. After L. L. Boilly

38.

LA COCARDE NATIONALE

Engraved by Auguste-Claude-Simon Legrand

Proof printed in colours.

AUGUSTE-CLAUDE-SIMON LEGRAND (1770-?) was the son of L. Legrand, known since 1751 as a fairly good engraver of vignettes, and principally remembered for having taught L. Guyot, who in his turn was to initiate Debucourt into the technique of colour printing. Having achieved no mean success with a pair of stipples after Lavreince, "Jamais d'accord," and "Serin cheri," and in a very different line with a likeness of Necker dated 1781, Legrand Junior relapsed into insignificant work, reproduced numerous flower pieces, and issued a mild set of portraits of the royal family at the Restoration. He usually signed with the anagram of Denargle: his address was Rue St. Jacques, opposite that of the Mathurins, No. 41. As a colour engraving, "la Cocarde" before us is looked upon as an achievement worthy of the lessons of Legrand Senior.

The young soldier represented wearing the red, white, and blue cockade in vertical stripes is a travesty, whose feminine features account for the legend on the second state of this rare plate: "Ah! qu'il est gentil"—Isn't he nice?

39, 40.

LA DOUCE RÉSISTANCE—ON LA TIRE AUJOURD'HUI

A pair engraved by Salvator Tresca; printed in colours

Lettered state.

TRESCA (17?-184?), a Palermitan engraver, had settled in Paris during the Revolution.

The original of the "Résistance," one of Boilly's finest works, was until 1914 in that portion of the Wallace Collection which had been bequeathed to Sir John Murray Scott in Paris;[1] that of "On la tire," a *grisaille* (flat tints), is in the Panhard collection: its title refers to the lottery tickets which the young woman, for some reason of her own, apparently means to obtain from her friend. It was included on the fateful list of pictures upon which the Republican Society of Arts based their denunciation of Boilly as a licentious painter. The subject must have been popular, for Gouy made a diminutive engraving of it, to be mounted as a simili-miniature on the lid of those fancy boxes which, in hard times, had replaced the sumptuous articles of virtu of the Louis XV and the Louis XVI periods.

Bourcard calls the pair "delightful" and, when in fine condition, among the most desirable interpretations of Boilly: he considers the second as the finer. Lady Dilke likes "la douce Résistance" better: "one among the most charming "scenes from everyday life for which Boilly deserves to be remembered, consulted, "and admired."

[1] Two issues of "l'Illustration" in June 1914 gave a capital account of the works of art which, ever since the death of Lord Hertford and his half-brother, Sir Richard Wallace, had been stored away in the corner house of Rue Lafitte, until Lady Sackville inherited and sold them. To Parisians that collection was a myth.

LA DOUCE RÉSISTANCE

By S. Tresca. After L. L. Boilly

LA DOUCE RÉSISTANCE.

ON LA TIRE AUJOURD'HUI

By S. Tresca. After L. I. Boilly

QUE N'Y EST-IL ENCORE?

By L. Petit. After L. L. Boilly

41.

QUE N'Y EST-IL ENCORE?

Engraved by Louis Petit

Proof printed in colours.

PETIT, whose dates are vaguely set down as between two centuries, was a specialist of Directoire prints from 1795 to 1799.

The pure truth of type and attitude, the boldness of the very clothes worn by the young woman, who unfeignedly misses her friend, testify to the sureness of hand and eye which distinguished Boilly. The painter has introduced in the composition an adaptation from a pair of the most popular statues of the time, now at the Louvre, "l'Enfant à la cage" and "l'Enfant à l'oiseau," of which Pigalle had executed four or five bronze replicas, after selling the original marbles in 1750 to the financier, Montmartel.

It would be impossible to find a more successful interpretation of Boilly's vivid colouring, or a colour print in a more brilliant condition. The collector's mark upon it is that of Mr. G. Mühlbacher.

ANTOINE BOREL

42, 43.

LA RACLÉE AVEC DES ROSES—LE BAIN DE PIEDS

A pair engraved by Antoine Cosme Giraud

Only state.

BOREL (1743-?), the son of a portrait painter, treated by turns *galant* subjects that gave scope to his love of elaborate dresses, and episodes of the American War of Independence for which he was full of enthusiasm. After making for himself a speciality of water-colours, sepias, and bistres kept purposely subdued as if mellowed by time, he arrived at the conclusion that, being a fairly good though not very vigorous draughtsman, vignettes would pay him better. A few English novels were illustrated by him, "Tom Jones" amongst them. The characteristic of his art was a delicacy of touch which enabled him to palliate the indelicate themes he sought by preference.

The aquafortis preparations by GIRAUD le Jeune (1760-?), a pupil of Lingée, attracted considerable attention. With the burin the artist was less successful than with his sharp and clear needle; to finish a print, somehow, was not his forte.

We have here, probably, two vignettes for "les Contemporaines," an erratic and bulky series of suggestive stories by Restif la Bretonne to which Borel contributed a number of drawings. The signal rarity of this pair, which Mr. Danlos believes to be unique, is due to the fact that the engraver, as was his wont, left it unfinished, without any rubric. Portalis and Beraldi mention it as the best work of Giraud Junior, and quote the impressions of the Behague collection sold in 1877. Bourcard goes further, and says that upon each was written in scratched letters: "Borel inv. & del." and "A. Giraud de T. aqua forti." The statement is puzzling, since the etchings before us show no such letters, and yet bear precisely the Behague mark. On the back is written "2 paoli e ½," the price charged by some dealer in the Roman states before 1860, when the "paolo," a coin equivalent to about two francs, was in circulation. If Count de Behague did not give more for his find, he invested an écu, or five franc piece, at 470 per cent.,

LE BAIN DE PIEDS

By A. C. Giraud. After A. Borel

for in 1877 at his sale the first print fetched 1,260 francs, the second 1,090 francs —two sensational bids forty years ago.

The rich interior decoration and such a peculiar object of dressing-room *virtu* as a figured tub, in keeping with the Chinese porcelain on the mantelpiece and the screen, add interest and style to two most uncommon scenes, where a bunch of fresh roses is used as a scourge, and a waggish young woman disguised as a flunkey disturbs her friend's ablutions with a practical joke. The point of both episodes is lost on us for want of a legend, but it is obvious that literature graced with such etchings must have belonged to that class for which Elvin, the hair-dresser who dealt in prohibited novels, was hauled over the coals by the King's censor for carrying a special line of Borel vignettes under the rose—of his cosmetics.

44.

L'INDISCRET

Engraved by François Dequevauviller in 1786

The etching and the first state.

A WORTHY companion to Lavreince's "Contretemps" by the same engraver (No. 249). The action of a resourceful maid who seizes a cloth and wraps up the head of the untimely visitor, imparts to this composition a more sensational note, in keeping with Borel's spirit. Between the etching and the finished state, two alterations are noticeable; the first in the expression of the woman's countenance as she is taken by surprise, the second in the size of the canopy over the bath, which has been heightened and narrowed.

As the original copper-plate exists, modern re-impressions abound.

45.

LE PAYSAN MÉCONTENT

Engraved by J. B. Morret, printed in colours

Only state.
Coat of arms of Count de Pont Bellanger.

"RARE, very pretty," says Bourcard of this print, to which the process of Morret has imparted a softer and a more refined appearance than is presented as a rule by most engravings after Borel. The same subject reversed was reproduced in black over the inappropriate title of "les Enjôleurs"—without artists' names.

46.

VOUS AVEZ LA CLEF, MAIS IL A TROUVÉ LA SERRURE

Engraved by Jean Louis Anselin

First state.
Coat of arms of Viscount Devaux.

Anselin (1754-1823), the grandson of one Enslyn, a Scotchman who in 1688 accompanied James II on his escape to France, was an excellent draughtsman, one of the best pupils of A. de St. Aubin. His portrait of Madame de Pompadour after Vanloo (No. 330) ranks among the finest of the school. After working at vignettes and frontispieces, he turned to light subjects of ready sale, "Vous avez la Clef" being his standard plate, dedicated to the Governor of Valence, President of the Grenoble Parliament. In the most fiery days of the Revolution Anselin, together with Bervic, was a member of the Committee for the tuition of the fine arts and discussed a proposal to banish from museums all Flemish pictures "as ridiculing mankind."

The original water-colour touched up with *gouache* passed from the Berend to the Lacroix collection in 1889, and was sold again in 1901.

D. S. BOSIO

47, 48.

LES OUBLIES—CACHE-CACHE

A pair, engraved by S. Nicolas Schenker, coloured by hand

D. S. BOSIO (1767-1841) and his brother J. Bosio, the sculptor, are the only natives of the Principality of Monaco, that land of bacchic beauty and idle splendour, who have ever attained some artistic distinction. By the elder there is at Versailles a portrait of Charles X, and at the Fine Arts School in Paris a picture of "Erotic Poetry writing under Love's Dictation"; there also lies on the shelves of many a library his forgotten treatise on the elements of drawing. Whatever may have been his ambition as a painter of history and allegories, or as a lecturer, Bosio's name is remembered chiefly through a minor and yet an epoch-marking branch of iconography, that of a special type of hand-coloured prints which might be taken for *genre* subjects, but were either intended as fashion plates or as skits on fashions.

Following the example of Debucourt, Bosio made a close study of the fads and demeanour of Parisians at a period of unrestrained eccentricity in dress. The influence of David's school, to which he owed his accurate drawing, gave his work a somewhat formal look without obliterating an innate sense of humour. Anyone who fancies the clinging short-waisted sheaths worn by Directoire and Empire belles should turn to Bosio's pretty groups to realize what fascination may be exerted by youth and natural charm, no matter how odd the attire.

As fashion plates cannot adequately fulfil their ephemeral scope if printed merely in black and white, engravings after Bosio must have fallen rather flat as long as the effect of the dresses represented was not set off by colours applied over a slight foundation of etching or burin. This was done by hand for a set of six compositions, "les Oublies," "Cache-cache," "les Quatre coins," "la Main chaude," "le Volant," "Colin Maillard," inserted in the "Bon Genre" to illustrate the garbs and attitudes affected by dandies and their fair friends between 1808 and 1818. The imitation of Debucourt's series of "Modes et manières du jour" (Nos. 101-106), extending from the eighth Republican year to 1808, is easily counted for, since La Mésacangère, the editor of both magazines, must have used, as it were, the old negatives. Bosio's neat pair before us, offered as a

premium to subscribers of the "Journal des Dames," a modish periodical very much in earnest,[1] is of a slightly larger size than the similar impressions issued for the "Bon Genre," which show the title of that work on the upper margin.

Few engravers seem to have signed their prints after Bosio. SCHENKER, who has put his name under "les Oublies" and "Cache-cache," is almost an exception. Portalis and Beraldi, who mention him as a stippler in the appendix to "les Graveurs," furnish no dates, no particulars about him.

[1] Only the superlative quality of the burins engaged on the "Monument du costume" saved the prints after Moreau from being coloured. Quite to the contrary, colour was highly desirable for "la Galerie des modes et costumes Français," the leading magazine of fashion from 1778 until 1790, illustrated by Bacquoy, Dupuis, Patas, and others after drawings by Desrais, Leclerc, Saint Aubin, Simonet, and Watteau fils. However, as the mention on the title-page, "coloured with the utmost care by Mme. Le Beau," could not apply in practice to all the plates given out, only those intended for the Court and some distinguished subscribers were actually hand-painted at an extra charge. This circumstance accounts for the scarcity of illustrations of "la Galerie" with the genuine Le Beau colours and for the price set upon them nowadays. Six of them at a sale in 1907 fetched 1,800 francs. Their number for the whole issue is put down tentatively at 430 by Cohen and Ricci, who, together with Messrs. de Goncourt, seem to think that no complete set of them exists. As a matter of fact, the owner of the collection described in this catalogue possesses a superb copy of the "Galerie des modes" containing over 500 engravings coloured by Mme. Le Beau, of gowns, fancy costumes, hats, and coiffures worn at the most attractive period of feminine attire, when under the auspices of Queen Marie Antoinette the refinements and extravagance of personal adornment were studied as never before.

After the Revolution all fashions overstepped the boundaries of grace in favour of the wildest eccentricities, until, under the Directoire, dressmakers, milliners, and tailors made regular guys of *Incroyables* and *Merveilleuses*.

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

(1703-1770)

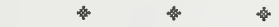
UNDER the initiative of the great King who discountenanced truth in art and shut his blue eyes before a Teniers, French society favoured an ideal of beauty wrapped up in emphatic solemnity. When the spruce reign of Louis XV emerged from the ostentatious century of Louis XIV, artistic canons stepped from majesty to the quintessence of grace. Prettiness during that light period of history became a national signboard, the soul of the times, the genius of a purely Parisian glory: BOUCHER.

Boucher's artistic initiator was Lemoine, who led the reaction against the monotonous school of Versailles, and with a fresh and bright touch made the first attempt in the direction of "fan decoration" on a large scale by transferring to grand painting the elements of *genre* painting: Lemoine, whose beaming colours, "pink rays," and unrestrained ease of composition took the public by storm in 1738 with the "Apotheosis of Hercules"—its figures all a-flutter—on the ceiling of the Salon de la Paix.[1] Though the time spent in his *atelier* had been so short that the pupil, according to Mariette, hardly ever referred to it, yet the early works of Boucher betrayed the assimilation of his master's style, a style derived from Correggio and Veronese, but saved from servility by French taste. In every line he drew the influence is as visible as is that of a still greater painter, since several etchings after Watteau, undertaken at the instance of Mr. de Julienne, had a considerable share in the training of Boucher. With genial perception of the accent and fire of that immortal draughtsman, his needle interpreted many of the now world-famous "Figures de différents caractères."[2] Thanks to this task his emoluments rose from 60 livres a month with board and lodging, earned as book illustrator in the workshop of J. F. Cars,[3] to 24 livres a day, paid by the wealthy new employer, "to their mutual satisfaction," says Baudicour, "for the young man was expeditious."

When barely twenty, he carried off the first Academy prize, and three years later joined the French school in Rome, to receive the severe tuition which, though

it may seem to make a dull man duller, is a pure advantage to one with sufficient temperament to react against it. That Italian monuments and masterpieces left him insensible, because he would steer clear of the classics as above his understanding, is a legend to be discarded. Whether the subject be religious, historical, or erotic, the conditions of setting, arrangement, colour, and form essential to a well-conceived work do not change, and in order to develop any manner of pictorial theme, the same knowledge of drawing and composition, the same graphic canons are needed.

In 1734, on the strength of his "Rinaldo and Armida," now at the Louvre, he was received at the Academy. From that time date a supremacy and a popularity such as no other artist had enjoyed since the days of Lebrun, in spite of the double life led by Boucher, who alternately exhausted himself by pleasure and work, yet never lost the power of self recovery.



The renovated mythology of the eighteenth century hails from the unwearied pencils and brushes of this Anacreon of French painting, always ready to flatter the senses and to discard subjects demanding gravity and self-restraint. Graceful voluptuousness is his avowed ideal. Though of pearl-like purity of flesh, fed on roses diluted in milk, his Venus is earthly; his goddesses, stretched on clouds as on carpets of an aerial seraglio, are modelled in deliberate ignorance of the veils of modesty and the severity of the nude. On Cytherean skies, conceived like a frieze by Clodion, the master hangs garlands and bunches of scampish Cupids, spoilt children of his make, unmistakably identified by dimpled limbs, chubby joints, plump calves, little choked-up hands, a type so familiar to him that almost invariably he gives it to his feminine divinities; a short oval face, a small forehead, a baby's chin, a heart-shaped mouth, a tip-tilted nose, eyes set low almost in line with the ears and far apart, far from the eyebrows.

Alighting from Olympus, the fancy of Boucher took relaxation in pastorals treated as episodes of comic operas with shepherds apparently arrayed for a minuet, and powdered shepherdesses with rouged and patched cheeks, attired in hooped satins, ribbon ruffs, and top-knots, holding a flowered crook, guarding a fold of downy lambs. No deep perspective redolent of Watteau, no fan-shaped hedges of hornbeam trimmed like ivy-mantled walls, no dream-sheltering, peace-instilling groves; Boucher's country indulges in no contemplative mood; it is a

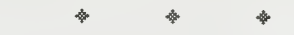
noisy spot sparkling with fresh colours, crowded with exuberant trees which dart rockets of branches. In the foreground invariably flows a brooklet, whence reeds shoot up and entwined saxifrages rise from the stones. Wide mullein leaves encroach on the grass, velvety moss overruns an occasional ruin, an old marble statue. Long-armed firs wave their green fringes, creepers hang in festoons over bathing naiads and act as side curtains to the landscape. This extravagant verdure affords an insight into the "enchanting wilderness" dreamt of by the bucolic imaginations of the time and depicted in the honeyed poems of a tenth Muse, Madame Deshoulières.

When attached to the Manufacture of Beauvais, where Oudry called him to his rescue, and of which he was soon to assume the management, he took to sketching views of the neighbourhood, to giving glimpses of farms and windmills, pigeon houses and poultry yards, to painting rustic barns and bundles of hay, old ladders, wheelbarrows, and brooding baskets under thatched roofs, gay with flowers sown by the birds. He jumbled this picked rubbish together with a wealth of confusion unknown in art until then, and for which the eighteenth century coined a brand new word, *fouillis*, Boucher's own helter-skelter, a well thought out medley. To enliven still further the sprightliness of the scene he let loose upon the sky a flight of birds, on the ground he set hens fighting, dogs barking, children playing, white swans leisurely mirroring themselves in the water. On the high road glinting with dust he sent forth a march past of cattle, of riotous sheep, of heavy-laden donkeys. A landscapist above all for ornamental purposes, Boucher's main concern was to spare his contemporaries the plainness or the *ennui* of everyday Nature. In the words of Cochin criticizing Tiepolo: "How delightful are his bright colours, but what a pity that Nature, beautiful as "she is, should by no means be as pretty as he makes her."

"With his exuberant and spirited cartoons Boucher increased," says Gougenot, "the reputation and output of the Beauvais factory." He did more: not only did he give it such an impulse that fewer and fewer orders for tapestry were sent to Brussels, but he imposed on posterity his own designs. How fertile was his work for the Gobelins, where again he replaced Oudry as Inspector in 1755, may be gathered from the fact that forty years later a Republican jury rejected for "artistic motives" three score of his models, including "Vénus et Vulcain," "l'Amour et

Psyché," "Aurore et Céphale," last not least "la Balançoire," the cynosure of tapestry lovers, a somewhat free rendering of Watteau's delightful "Escarpolette."

Boucher's "grandest machines," the "Dawn and Setting of the sun," his triumph, still dazzling now at Hertford House, were also designed for the Gobelins and bought on the spot by Madame de Pompadour. Who could ignore in the magician who drew them—if nothing else by him remained—the temperament of a great painter, or refuse to acknowledge the justice done him by David, who, while strenuously sapping his influence, used to say: "N'est pas Boucher qui veut"—"It is not granted to everybody to be Boucher"?



"Quoi, les Grâces encore et Vénus et l'Amour?
"N'avais—tu pas, Boucher, déjà peint Pompadour?"

asked Voltaire, with sarcastic sycophancy. When the Marquise came across Boucher, she met the painter born, grown, and trained to be her courtier, poet, and historian, the permanent Secretary of her self-assumed Ministry of Aesthetics. As Bernis, the diplomatist, represents her statesmanship, so Boucher illustrates her artistic personality. She secured for him the support of Marigny, her brother; she entrusted him with the ornamental work of her boudoir and gallery at Bellevue, with the designs of her furniture and her fans; she bade him to instruct her when the caprice of the moment prompted her to handle the etching needle; she invested him with the privileged appointment of Royal Decorator, by no means a sinecure, and, to keep her protégé well in the mind of Louis XV, she placed the picture of "Vulcan's Forge" in the King's bedchamber at Marly.[4] Wishing to endow posterity with her own image, she chose Boucher as her limner beside Latour. Seven times at least she sat to Boucher in nonchalant attitudes, with the absent-minded expression of the favourite who waits for the perquisite of more favours, bedecked with semi-regal finery and flounces, in the everyday coronation robes of a left-hand queen, surrounded by the emblems and implements of her tastes, recreations, and state affairs, between a bunch of roses and a King Charles spaniel, or next to a book-case surmounted by a clock where Cupid stands sentry before Time a-flying. Her most representative—should one call it official?—portrait by the Master is known as "The Marquise on her couch." Two versions of it exist, the better of the two at Waddesdon; the other, dated 1758, in the Adolphe de Rothschild collection. The latter attracted the unfriendly notice of

Grimm, who compares it with the pastel by La Tour exhibited two years earlier: "That," he says, "was much criticised; this is worse . . . overloaded with "baubles." "Grimm," remarks Lady Dilke, "must have been so ill-disposed by the "general style of Boucher's work, that he was blind to the merits of a by no "means inconsiderable performance. The force of character of this woman is "firmly written in the structure of the visage; the gorgeous dress and accessories "handled with a freedom which does not exclude an appropriate stateliness of "treatment and gives dignity to the magnificence of the general effect. In curious "contrast is the small full length of the 'Marquise in the garden'—one of the "gems of the Jones bequest at the Victoria and Albert Museum—the figure "of which is of remarkably sound execution. The immense pretentions of the "official portrait have disappeared; white gowned and with white lace at her "throat, she sits under the blue sky against a background of green trees, a book "open under her right hand, her left arm resting upon other volumes. In a third "picture of a somewhat similar character"—once in the Véron collection and bought in 1868 by Lord Hertford for 28,000 francs at the Didier sale—"we "meet the favourite again out of doors. From the grey stone of a spiral column "against which she leans, and from a dark orange tree, the lavish laces and dull "rose hues of the dress tell softly: the flesh tints are very pure, and the figure "interests by a natural air, in spite of the elaborate formality of the toilet almost "as stately as that of 'Pompadour on her couch.'"[5]

The support lavished by the favourite on the painter survived her death in 1764. She had so accustomed Louis XV to his name and his style, that in the following year Boucher was appointed the King's first painter in the place of Carle Vanloo by letters patent couched in tutelary language. At the same time, as if Vanloo's inheritance must be wholly his, the Academy awarded to him a Directorship which in no way depended on his post at Court.[6]

A racy artist by nature, his personal gifts, better than on large conventional canvases, may be appreciated on less ambitious performances such as "Diana bathing" at the Louvre, or "Venus resting" in Baron E. de Rothschild's collection, the finest among the works by Boucher which Paris has been able to retain,[7] or on those sketches where his imagination and his hand rushing spontaneously from one end of the paper to the other extemporized a landscape or

a pastoral, rehearsed the effects of gorgeous draperies, unfolded a flight of Cupids, or exhibited a long series of opulent figures in recumbent attitudes, reminiscent of Rubens and known at the time under the plausible name of "Academies." "Le Reveil" (No. 55) is their finished prototype, for which the Irish Miss Murphy won an almost historic reputation as the sitter best endowed by Nature to display her form in all sorts of poses, often turning her back on the spectator, as if vexed by the intrusion.

No less than with pictures the Master gained an uncommon popularity with drawings, of which, according to a contemporary and conservative estimate of the "Mercure de France," ten thousand were sold under his name, though not often above his signature, for already in his lifetime a Boucher drawing did not necessarily mean a drawing by Boucher. Until then spirited studies in pencil or chalks, jotted down by a French artist with no second thought except to record some fanciful inspirations, had no commercial value. Boucher was the first to turn to tangible profit his own drawings as well as the clever imitations produced in his studio by treating them as precious leaves torn off a *liber veritatis* to be stored away in portfolios, or framed for decorative purposes. A keen demand having thus been created, it became the correct thing for amateurs to collect them, following on the example of Madame de Pompadour and the Farmers general.[8] Basan and Joullain dealt in them, and as Boucher was lucky in all things, it came to pass that in the midst of this new development of taste a skilful engraver, Demarteau,[9] improved and perfected the process called *en manière de crayon*, invented in 1757 by J. Ch. François, whereby facsimiles of red, white, and black chalk sketches were placed within reach of every purse, suitably framed under glass. Thus at first sight even a practiced eye could be deceived by the perfect adherence to the lines, grain, and *morbidezza* of the original *sanguines*. Most attractive of all such imitations, and now the rarest, are "la Jeune Fille à la rose," if printed on green paper, "la Bergère à la cible," both by Demarteau, and "la Bouquetière galante," a small folio by Tilliard.[10]

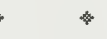
An artist moulded according to the ideal of his contemporaries, the accomplice of their fashions and foibles, destined to immortalize the graces of the century, was bound to be spoilt by praise. Critics extolled the fluidity of his brushes, the alluring unrestraint of his groups, the superfine poise of his heads; they hailed as creations his open-air compositions, his fluttering draperies admirably contrived to set off the nude; they almost unanimously agreed that he could paint history,

mythology, and landscapes as well as architecture, flowers, and fruit, that he handled light better than anybody else, that to the glorious pink ray—*rayon rose*—of Lemoine he had given a sheen that made his master's works look pale. A celestial air was actually attributed to the worldly saints and flirtatious angels of his occasional altar-pieces. In this chorus of encomium, the temperate echo of public enthusiasm, one or two voices hardly dared to sing out of tune by insinuating that Boucher overdid brilliance, scattered his lights, barely contrasting them with shadows, and kneaded with brick red the flesh of his gods; that he placed prettiness and coquetry far above beauty and distinction; that he over-folded and crumpled his draperies; that he took in earnest those whimsical Watteauesque figures, costumes, and chimeric ornaments which under the auspices of Pompadour had turned China into a province of Rococo; above all, that he both lacked repose and individual expression. But on the principle that "the masses are wittier than Voltaire," [11] general opinion stifled as negligible a few croakers, and as late as 1769 "a rational visitor to the Salon" wrote: "his brush is that of a wizard who "suspends for a time the mind's functions and only calls admiration into play." Admiration of the Master's works was indeed so contagious that even French Academy pensioners returning from Rome were expected to bring back the imitation of Boucher on the tips of their pencils. It looked as if his influence were bound to shape the art of posterity.

One man bluntly resented so blind an infatuation: Diderot. Every succeeding Salon furnished fresh food for his intemperate sarcasms; he stoned the god, besmeared the painter, boxed the man's ears: "Degradation of taste, colour, com-"position, character, expression and drawing must follow hard upon this moral "degeneration. . . . Yet, at the very moment when Boucher ceases to be an "artist he is appointed first painter to the King. . . . Loving everything but "truth, his example is bound to be fatal to the young. . . . Had he but wished "it, he might have been the first of all; as it is, he will scarcely leave a name in "history."

Diderot, whose genius was made of passion and lacked measure, had in art matters an acquired and a bookish appreciation wittily, nay eloquently, vented, but by no means original or infallible. A conversation, a remark, a joke of Chardin, Cochin, or Falconet often prompted his own impulse before a canvas or marble. An exuberant instinct, the flood-tide of his ideas, did the rest, carrying criticism to outrageous lengths. Was the sternness of his opinions in good faith? The answer

is dubitative, though it must be owned that Diderot's unfairness to Boucher might be entitled to some excuse. Besides having hailed Chardin as an innovator, Diderot claimed Greuze as his own invention and fancied himself as the apostle of philanthropic art. The mission of the beautiful, according to him, was to be the good; plastic works must hold a practical teaching, a contribution to the sum of moral sensations circulating among mankind. An odd standard this by which to judge Boucher and one that led the Encyclopædist to take to task the painter's Cupids as useless, unable to read, write, or strip hemp.



Had the French public been more exacting, the first painter of Louis XV might have aimed high; but in the fever of incessant production he lost his former sobriety, slipped into hasty methods, dropped into the habit of relying on his astonishing sureness of memory and of hand without reference to Nature.[12] The change did not escape Grimm: "When he came back from Italy, Boucher gave "us some pictures of admirable colour and character; now he might provide ladies "with pretty fans." Indeed, his temperament as a colourist had been the most remarkable of the whole school, but after rising, at the zenith of his powers, to the manly and warm tints of the Venetians he was misled by the limitations of an industrial and, to a certain extent, a mechanical art. Beauvais and the Gobelins turned him into a decorator. Chronologically arranged, his canvases betray from year to year the alterations wrought by the requirements of both factories on the wonderful gamut of his shades. Hampered by the scanty possibilities of harmony between silk and wool, having to forego the values of graduated shadows to seek brightness, softness, and sparkle on every side of a composition, he must perforce dip his brushes into comparative insipidity and, however reluctantly, exchange the palette of a painter for the weaver's chromatic register, thus allowing his lights to turn curdy white, his trees grey, the verdure blue, the distances lilac. The invaluable help he volunteered for years to the Paris Opera House in connection with scenery and wardrobe, his close co-operation as stage adviser to the theatricals at Versailles, on which Pompadour with her thin voice and dramatic talent relied to divert the King, contributed to an unconscious artistic perversion which in the long run led Boucher to produce not a few tiresome landscapes fit for a magic lantern or a pantomime to be enacted by roseate puppets. The recurrence of the same childlike features in his compositions—be they mythological or Arcadian—

interferes with variety and confines to a somewhat inane unindividuality the attractiveness of beauties described by Diderot as bovine or sheepish, finikin and witless.

❖ ❖ ❖

When he died at the age of sixty-seven popular opinion was already forming against his art. Bachaumont summed up the prevailing sentiment: "This artist "enjoyed a precocious reputation carried beyond his deserts. His facile brush was "agreeable, witty, and altogether too fine for the rural subjects to which he "devoted it: his shepherdesses, like those of Fontenelle, had more coquetry than "naturalness."

Turning once more to the vivid pages of Diderot we find among many harsh sayings which at the last, however, he declared himself ready to retract, a judgement as sane and true of the Boucher we see to-day as it was in 1765: "Fit to turn the "head of two conditions of men: society people and painters. His elegance, "affectation, romanesque gallantness, facility and sparkle, his rouged flesh colours, "his enticing choice of subjects, are bound to captivate fops and ladies of easy "virtue, a species to which good taste, truth, artistic severity are unknown "quantities. Artists who perceive to what an extent this man has overcome "technical difficulties, an achievement which is everything to them and which they "alone can gauge, artists, I say, would naturally go down on their knees to him." And later on, as a necrology: "In certain directions he exhibited the skill of a "great Master, but gradually he became a prey to the luxury of the frivolous life "he loved." [13]

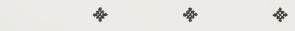
While the defects of Boucher contributed to his enormous success, Grimm and Bachaumont no more than Diderot seem to have realized that the typical representative of a decadent art was at least of the true race and that precisely, because he reflected contemporary artificiality, his reputation and value would be re-affirmed by an after age not only in France but on the other side of the Channel and the Atlantic.[14] "It is not the function of an artist to create his own surround- "ings: if he attempts to do so, it must cost him isolation from the life of his time "and involve a heavy drain on his own forces."

❖ ❖ ❖

Boucher no more deserved the rough handling of philosophers than he was entitled to the worship of a fashionable set. Neither a dauber of fans nor a

Jack-of-all-trades, he was an original, highly gifted painter, carried away by the graphic formula of scroll ornaments, the sinuous undulating lines of *rocaille* far removed from the rigidity of David's style. Wanting in the delicacy which baffles the commonplace of practice, he lacked a thoroughbred mark: distinction. The slang studio word, *canaille*, fits his talent roughly, for as de Goncourt happily puts it: "an elegant vulgarity is his signature." If he was *canaille*, so was the society of his day, if he had "manner and no style," the same may be said of the men and women with whom he lived, and if he proved to be indispensable to the King's mistress, it was hardly a drawback to him never to have met the Graces in respectable surroundings. "The man who embodies in his art the tendencies of an "epoch, whatever his shortcomings, needs must be someone."

"In Fragonard Boucher found his true heir, the representative in some "respects more distinguished than himself of tendencies to which the pupil gave a "complete and final expression."



At the Museum of National Archives in Paris, once the residence of Prince de Rohan Soubise, anyone can read Queen Marie Antoinette's parting letter to her sister-in-law, Madame Elizabeth, among the documents on view, near the alcove where two "Shepherd's offerings" by Boucher still adorn the overdoors. In the glass cases of the next room, under two panels of "Cupid's education" from the same hand, are displayed sentences of the Revolutionary tribunal, Fouquier-Tinville's requisition of an escort for the men to be led to the guillotine, the death warrant of twenty-two Girondin deputies bearing among others the signature of David. There, within a playful decoration of mythic and pastoral scenes, history herself stands erect and with tragic evidence cries aloud, "this killed *that*."

[1] When the Salon de la Paix was thrown open for the first time, Cardinal Fleury expressed the general feeling of a court accustomed to the heavy handling of Lebrun's frescoes by saying: "I always "thought a new ceiling would spoil Versailles." Nevertheless, from that moment the chief ambition of great decorators was to sacrifice to effects of full relief all the trammels of the architectural framework by which a decorative design was bound to be enclosed. Even Largillière had boasted of being able, if he liked, "to carry your eye beyond that wall."

[2] The second section of the engraved works of Watteau, sumptuously published, *circa* 1735, by de Julienne, bears the title of "Figures de différents caractères de paysages et d'études" as drawn from nature by the Master, and contains 350 plates, divided in two folio volumes. The etchers were, besides Boucher, the brothers Audran, Cars, De Caylus, Cochin, Desplaces, Lépicié, Sylvestre, and Carle Vanloo.

The original edition is very rare and in great demand. See the remarks in Mariette's own hand on the copy at the Arsenal Library in Paris.

3 Father of Laurent Cars, the engraver of Boucher's drawings for the plays of Molière, one of the finest set of illustrations of the first half of the century.

4 At the first audience granted to Boucher, the King who, because of the warmth and vivacity of his works, expected to see a young man, expressed his surprise at finding him older than he thought. "Sire," was the answer, "the honour conferred upon me by Your Majesty will rejuvenate me."

5 The monumental *catalogue raisonné* of Boucher's works, issued in 1907 by Mr. E. Michel of the Louvre Museum, enters as portraits of Madame de Pompadour thirteen pictures and six drawings, some of them replicas with a few alterations, or studio copies of the "Marquise on her couch" and the "Marquise in the garden." A small highly-finished version of the first, a sort of easel miniature, probably from the Didier collection, is in the National Gallery of Scotland. At the Ménars sale in 1782 the Duc de Chaulnes, who had been engaged at one time to the daughter of Pompadour, gave 154 livres for another of her Boucher portraits. One more of them, said to have been a masterpiece in pastels, changed hands in the same year at the Sireul sale for 200 livres, as did, for 6 livres and 3 sols, a first sketch in black and white for the full length on the sofa. The Quintin Craufurd catalogue of 1820 also mentions a "Madame de Pompadour at her dressing-table," by Boucher, probably the small portrait now in the Schlichting room at the Louvre. Curiously enough, of so many likenesses of the Marquise by the Master, only one was engraved at the time, and that by a foreigner. Watson, who interpreted it as a frontispiece to a set of prints by the Marquise—so to speak—copied it from the unfinished plate attributed to Daullé, of which one impression exists at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

6 Boucher made a poor Director. Taken up as he was by commissions that brought him in at least 50,000 livres a year, he lacked the activity and inclination demanded by such a responsible, multiform charge of which, like his predecessor, he took the title and advantages, leaving the rest, work and details, to Cochin. Had it not been for the contributions of amateurs "the Academy, whose revenues, according "to Diderot, were reduced to the sale of Exhibition catalogues, must close her doors because of a Director "without initiative and zeal."

7 To the Stockholm Gallery we must look for the pick of Boucher's pictures, the "Birth and Toilet of Venus," "Leda and the Swan," the "Marchande de modes" and a few more, secured at the time with keen discrimination by Count de Tessin. (*See* CHARDIN, note 4.)

8 Madame de la Haye and Madame Dazincourt vied with each other, so did the Count de Stainville, Messrs. de Grandcourt, Nera, and de Fontaine in trying to secure the best of them. The prodigious collection left by Mr. de Sireul was appropriately described at his sale in 1781 as "the portfolio of Mr. Boucher." In the nineteenth century the finest selection of the Master's drawings has been that of the Marquis de Cypierre, sold in 1845, which included thirty of them, the most sought after being touched up with chalks (*pastellés*).

9 A summer-house—*salon frais*—removed in recent years from the Sorbonne quarter to Mr. Groult's residence near the Bois de Boulogne, is described by Goncourt: "A light trellis forms the frame of doors "and windows, divided by four garden scenes with gorgeous peacocks and flamingoes, obviously the "work of pupils, while the Master's spirited hand is evident on the overdoors, where tutelary Loves in "monochrome munch apples and splash water about. The whole decoration was a token of Boucher's "regard for Demarteau." Unfortunately Mr. Courboin has ascertained that Demarteau never dwelt in the house in question, which was bought by his nephew, thirteen months after the death of the engraver and seven years after that of the painter. Another evidence of Boucher's decorative instinct in a variety of treatment is afforded by the large mythological panels and inter-panels transferred from the old Hôtel de Marcilly to that of Baron Edmund de Rothschild in the Faubourg St. Honoré.

10 If the collection described in this catalogue is less concerned with Boucher than with the other leading eighteenth-century masters, it is because the amateur who formed it adhered to his own convictions and looked upon the Demarteau section of Boucher's engraved works as a deliberate deception, whereby prints might pass off as originals, instead of being presented as *bona fide* imitations.

[11] "Tout le monde a plus d'esprit que Monsieur de Voltaire," an anonymous aphorism prompted by eighteenth-century experience.

[12] In the ultra-modern words of S. Reinach, "Il dessinait de chic." Sir Joshua Reynolds has recorded that in 1752 he saw Boucher working on a large composition without model or scheme. See No. 27, note 1.

[13] Of the splendid appointments of his home we obtain a glimpse from the journal of Wille, who writes in 1771: "I have taken my wife and son to view the collections of the late Mr. Boucher, whose sale has "just begun. Most of his curios are still *in situ* and merit the greatest attention on account of their "choice and variety. My wife and Frederick were amazed at the china, precious stones, lacquer, armour, "musical instruments, and cabinets got together during a long course of years with as much taste as "expense by the famous painter."

[14] Larousse's "Grande Encyclopédie," whose verdicts on pre-Revolutionary art re-hash those of the Encyclopædists of the previous century, makes fun of English collectors and their partiality to Boucher: "If Britishers invented 'bifteck' [*sic*], surely they have never been considered as arbiters of taste." The jibe was obviously meant for Lord Hertford, Lord Ward, or plain Mr. John Jones, whose bids at auction sales under the Second Empire staggered the Hôtel Drouot.

LE DÉPART DU COURRIER

By J. F. Beauvarlet. After F. Boucher

L'ARRIVÉE DU COURRIER

By J. F. Beauvarlet. After F. Boucher

49, 50.

LE DÉPART DU COURRIER—L'ARRIVÉE DU COURRIER

A pair engraved by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet

First state.

As a diversion from too much mythology and too many demi-goddesses, Boucher took up pastoral subjects, and turned rustic life into an ingenious romance of Nature, vaguely reminiscent of Watteau. Even within the limitation of these two ovals, he contrived to scatter his bucolic characters and properties: a boy shepherd and his sweetheart, a dog yelping before a carrier-pigeon, a few silky sheep, a couple of doves, a flower basket, a bagpipe, a gourd. For background he gave them the noisy and fussy landscape of his particular choice: a babbling brook, a luxuriant vegetation, clumps of decorative trees, the sort of self-made open air green-house which the eighteenth century dreamt of in its hours of rural appetite and domesticated imagination. Probably, Fontenelle had foreseen such pretty fads when he wrote: "Nowadays pastoral themes are treated like the dresses worn by country folk on "the stage; trimmed with ribbons and lace, their shape alone need be in keeping "with the wearer's avocation."

Probably out of consideration for Beauvarlet's masterly burin, Bourcard overcomes his objection to the engraved works of Boucher in favour of this charming pair, "les deux Courriers," of which he gives a description and enumerates the three states, warning print collectors against modern re-impressions from the respective old plates.

51.

LES DEUX CONFIDENTES

Engraved by Jean Ouvrier

First state.

CHIEFLY taken up with the interpretation of Gravelot's vignettes, OUVRIER (1725-1784), a pupil of Lebas, has also a few regular prints to his name. The best of them, according to Portalis and Beraldi, is the composition wherein the secrets exchanged between two young women seem to affect the countenance of an ornamental lion crouched on the garden wall.

The original picture belonged to Madame de Pompadour and fetched 481 livres at the sale of Marigny, her brother.

52.

JEUNE FILLE À LA ROSE

Engraved by Gilles Demarteau

Only state, on green paper.

On the principle that a pencil stroke may be decomposed in a myriad of dots determined by the grain of the paper, eighteenth-century engravers endeavoured to produce facsimiles of crayon drawings. The Encyclopædia issued between 1751 and 1772 by d'Alembert and Diderot contains an illustrated article on the subject written by Montdorge and ending as follows: "It appears by a certificate of the "Academy of Painting, and by the Royal grant of a pension to Mr. François that "he is the inventor of this style of engraving of which Mr. Marteau has subsequently "given some capital specimens."

"This sentence," writes Mr. Courboin, "is somewhat restrictive: as a matter "of fact, both François and Demarteau claimed the priority of the invention. But "as Pond, an Englishman, had signed some such facsimiles as early as 1735, when "Demarteau was thirteen years of age, while François himself traced his first "experiments no farther back than 1740, the question of precedence is settled in "favour of Arthur Pond."

On being consulted by the Academy, Cochin, always well informed, stated in 1757 that some English prints reproducing to perfection the grain of pencil were already familiar to *cognoscenti*. Whereupon the Academy "expressed approval of "a process apt to multiply the examples of the finest drawings" and, on the intervention of Marigny, François was appointed engraver of drawings to the King. In 1762 Magny sent a memoir to the Academy claiming for himself the honour of the same invention, "but that eminent company did not deem it fit to enter into a "difficult discussion which would be useless for the progress of art."

One point is beyond dispute: the superiority of Gilles DEMARTEAU (1722-1776). Whether he imitated a *sanguine*—red chalk drawing—or, by means of two and three plates fitting to keys, a drawing done with various crayons, he is a master, a past master, in that particular process through which he established the popularity of Boucher's sketches. Perfection proved to be the defect of his facsimiles, their deceptive appearance having induced at the time more than one superficial *curioso* to look upon such astounding reproductions as deliberate counterfeits. When eighteenth-century plates fell into disfavour and yet colour prints by Debucourt,

Janinet, Regnault, Sergent, and Descourtis held quietly their own, Demarteau was ostracized as a craftsman who had practised imposition. This mistaken conclusion prevailed far into the nineteenth century, and the Christophle collection, as remarked before in these pages, was a loser by it in the hands of its former owner.

But, *tempora mutantur*, criticism nowadays is more enlightened, Demarteau has returned to the fore with a vengeance, and his "Jeune Fille à la rose," perhaps the rarest, certainly the most beautiful, of all engravings in the manner of crayons, has found its way to this great portfolio, as if to make ample amends for past errors of judgement. Apparently not more than four impressions of it are known to exist on green paper, the paper on which in all probability Boucher drew the original.

As there is no *catalogue raisonné* of the works of Demarteau, the only available information begins and ends in this case with the letters under the subject. The list of the artist's stock in trade, of which the Doucet Library possesses a copy, mentions 664 prints, mostly after Boucher, Cochin, Huet, entered against a reference number and under the respective titles, where there are any, without further comment.

Demarteau became a member of the Academy in 1766, and four years later was granted a royal pension.

53.

JUPITER ET LÉDA

Engraved by William Wynne Ryland

First state.

RYLAND (1732-1783), an Englishman, was attracted to Paris by the reputation of the *atelier* of Lebas, where all the developments of engraving from the *estampe galante* to the most delicate caprices of the vignette were cultivated.[1] He spent five years in France and as a draughtsman profited also by the lessons of Boucher, under whose supervision he interpreted this and another composition, "A Peasant wading across a river." Wille, who patronized him, wrote in his diary: "Ryland is well off. His King allows him a yearly pension of 5000 l. a hand-"some remuneration indeed, considering that when his work is done he keeps it as "a present: an unprecedented privilege. . . . Ryland has just been commissioned "to buy a complete set of my historical prints for Windsor Castle and I have "supplied him with truly regal impressions."

On his return home he was appointed engraver to George III and owed a fair amount of popularity to a set of mellow plates after Angelica Kauffmann. He it was who introduced colour stippling into England, a process called to an extraordinary, but not wholly merited, success. Having launched into a large printing enterprise, he tried his hand at the reproduction of bank-notes and was accordingly hanged.

The original picture, "Leda and the Swan," purchased in 1741 by Count de Tessin, Swedish Minister in Paris, either on his own account or on that of Queen Louise Ulrica, is in the National Gallery at Stockholm. For pearl-like quality, brilliance, and purity it bears comparison with "The Birth of Venus," that masterpiece of Boucher from the same *provenance*, now shown almost next to it.

[1] Among his fellow students there was Robert Strange, who, having followed Charles Edward in 1745 took refuge in Paris after Culloden.

54.

LE MOINEAU DE LESBIE

First state.

THE name of this composition, interpreted by an unknown engraver, is merely a pretext for one of those idyls which Boucher, at the head of the Beauvais manufactory, staged in an enchanted sort of wilderness admirably suited to the decorative character of his tapestry cartoons. A picturesque disorder, a tangle of flowers and creepers, of thatched sheds and crumbling walls, encroach to such an extent upon the pastoral itself that "find the sparrow" should be the appropriate legend of a very rare and, as far as the subject goes, an unusually puzzling plate.

In literature the title chosen by Boucher would be too ambitious. Even if it were possible to re-kindle the feeling in which they were originally fused, the little poems of Catullus to Lesbia must always be the despair of translators. Granting that the individual words of the text have their precise equivalent in modern languages, what of a pervading tenderness couched in endearing diminutives, nay, of the musical softness of the Latin syllables?

If an interpretation of the world-famous elegy had been needed in eighteenth-century art, the theme suited Greuze better than any other master—Greuze, who in the "Oiseau mort" shown at the Salon of 1765 and engraved by Flipart, paraphrased the old melodrama of a broken-hearted maiden before an empty cage, a dead pet. As for Boucher, whose scholarly mind did by no means make game of the classics—whatever may have been Diderot's opinion—the opportunity for a plausible Arcadian setting in this case meant more to him than a brief utterance in song, which alone would have secured immortality to the greatest of Roman lyric poets.[1]

[1] The charm of Catullus's love-laden lyrics to Lesbia—Clodia in real life, the sister of Publius Clodius Pulcher—is of the kind which belongs only to few of the world's great poets. While striking home at once to the hearts of other men by its sincerity and depth it does this in cadences which captivate the ear by their unsurpassable sweetness.

The elegy to Lesbia's dead sparrow was imitated by Ovid with indifferent success. Juvenal alludes to it as if everybody in his day knew all about the bird for whose sad demise Lesbia wept out her lovely eyes. Martial makes several references to it. The imitations and translations of later writers are innumerable; the best of them serving only to set off the unapproachable conciseness, delicacy, and finish of the original.

Noel quotes twenty-five adaptations in Greek, Latin, Italian, and French. The following is Theodore Martin's version into English verse:

Loves and Graces mourn with me,
Mourn, fair youths, where'er ye be.
Dead my Lesbia's sparrow is,
Sparrow that was all her bliss,
Than her very eyes more dear;
For he made her dainty cheer,
Knew her well, as any maid
Knows her mother, never strayed
From her bosom, but would go
Hopping round her to and fro,
And to her and her alone
Chirrup'd with such pretty tone.
Now he treads that gloomy track,
Whence none ever may come back.

Out upon you and your power
Which all fairest things devour,
Orcus' gloomy shades, that e'er
Ye took my bird that was so fair!
Ah, the pity of it! Thou
Poor bird, thy doing 'tis, that now
My loved one's eyes are swoll'n and red,
With weeping for her darling dead.

The word *illuc* in the text "unde negant redire quenquam" throws the mind at once across "the "undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveller returns."

55.
LE RÉVEIL

Engraved by Pierre Charles Levesque in 1765

First state.

LEVESQUE (1727-1812), an author and an artist who could handle in turn the pen and the burin, was recommended by Diderot to Catherine II, and having secured a chair of literature at Petrograd, wrote a history of Russia. As he combined theory with practice, example with precept, as he possessed "the engraver's own language," Watelet[1] entrusted to him the article on Engraving for a Fine Arts dictionary.

Writing in 1745 to Count de Tessin, who bargained on behalf of the Queen of Sweden for the set of "Four Hours of the day," Berck, his agent, stated that the price must be kept secret, "for Boucher makes it a rule to charge 600 l. if the "picture is to be highly finished." So pointed a reservation shows that prices varied according to the master's two methods: the one free, rapid, adapted to a certain class of summary sketches, the other, such as that of "Vénus et les Amours" (No. 56) and "le Réveil," both now in the Marcille Jahan collection, so overworked that Diderot asked "is it really necessary when painting an undraped woman to rouge her body as much, if not more than her cheeks?"[2]

Whether or no Boucher lavished a surfeit of colour over a woman's limbs, no painter displayed them with greater ease of undulating lines and less respect for the severity of the classic nude. None weaved more garlands of sprawling goddesses and Cupids, nor understood better than he did the provocativeness of nonchalant attitudes assumed by the eternal feminine on the clouds of an apotheosis, or indulged in by a mere mortal on a couch. No blooming young beauty was ever wrapped by him within the forbidding veil of bashfulness, or hallowed with the nimbus of purity; the pearly, satiny flesh of his divinities, Nereids, and "awakening Morfils" was deliberately undressed. But who could more skilfully disrobe the physical Venus; who lend her a readier smile, a more alluring deportment, a more tempting unrestraint? The very folds of the soft draperies on which he laid her are purposely luxuriant, the whole arrangement being meant to stir wantonness round creatures more enticing than lovable, more bewitching than beautiful.

Under the generic name of "Femme couchée," the Master left various versions of the same subject in pencil, in chalks, and in oils, for which Miss Murphy had

obviously posed.[3] One of them in the Néra collection, lithographed by Leroux, reappears in the engraving by Demarteau, who also reproduced a similar figure turned from left to right and accompanied by a Cupid, the position of the arms being slightly altered. Still another was interpreted by Huquier. The British Museum has a fine drawing in red after the same studio model seen from the back, twisted like a snake, a feat of virtuosity. A similar "Académie de femme," once in the Heseltine collection, bears the following old hand-written inscription, "the "finest drawing of this kind to be seen. It is by Mr. Boucher, rightly named the "painter of the Graces."

The first, not quite finished, state of Levesque's "Réveil" is rare.

[1] Ch. H. WATELET (1718-1786), a receiver general of finance for the Orléans division, personified the lighter philosophy which replaced the traditional dignity of the great century of Louis XIV. A finished type of the fashionable, wealthy, intelligent, epicurean amateur of the time of Louis XV and Louis XVI, one of the picked circle of Madame de Pompadour, he stood easily after the death of Count de Caylus at the head of the busy crowd of society people who were pleased to have a talent for the arts. A keen collector, a fair musician, "he liked," says Mariette, "to paint, draw, and engrave; to all these "accomplishments he added another and superior, that of writing elegantly French poetry and prose." His chief literary achievement was a versified and illustrated "Art of Painting" which opened to him the Academy doors; he composed tragedies, comedies, and an essay on gardening, contributed articles for the Encyclopædia, and published two volumes for a Dictionary of the Fine Arts, which Levesque re-edited with additions in 1792. Although Georges Sand immoderately praises him as "an etcher superior to any "of his day," the three hundred or more plates he engraved are almost forgotten, with the exception perhaps of a set of "Vases" after Pierre and Vien's drawings, and two portraits after Cochin, one of the future Marquis of Marigny, the brother of the reigning favourite, the other of pretty Mme. Le Comte, whose relations with the amateur artist and the fashion after which the world accepted them are summed up in a passage of Mme. Vigée Lebrun's "Memoires": "In his enchanted isle, *le Moulin Joli*, Mr. Watelet "a great art lover, a distinguished man of a sweet engaging disposition, entertained a well-chosen set with a "grace and simplicity in keeping with the surroundings. A friend to whom he had been attached for thirty "years lived in his house. Time had apparently sanctioned their tie, for they were received together in the "best company as well as the lady's husband who, curiously enough, never left her."

[2] Boucher's answer to critics who blamed him for constantly throwing on the flesh something like the flash of a red curtain, was that through a defective eyesight he saw a dull and sickly colour where others descried cinnabar or vermilion.

[3] *See* No. 27, note 1.

56.

VÉNUS ET LES AMOURS

Engraved by Robert Gaillard

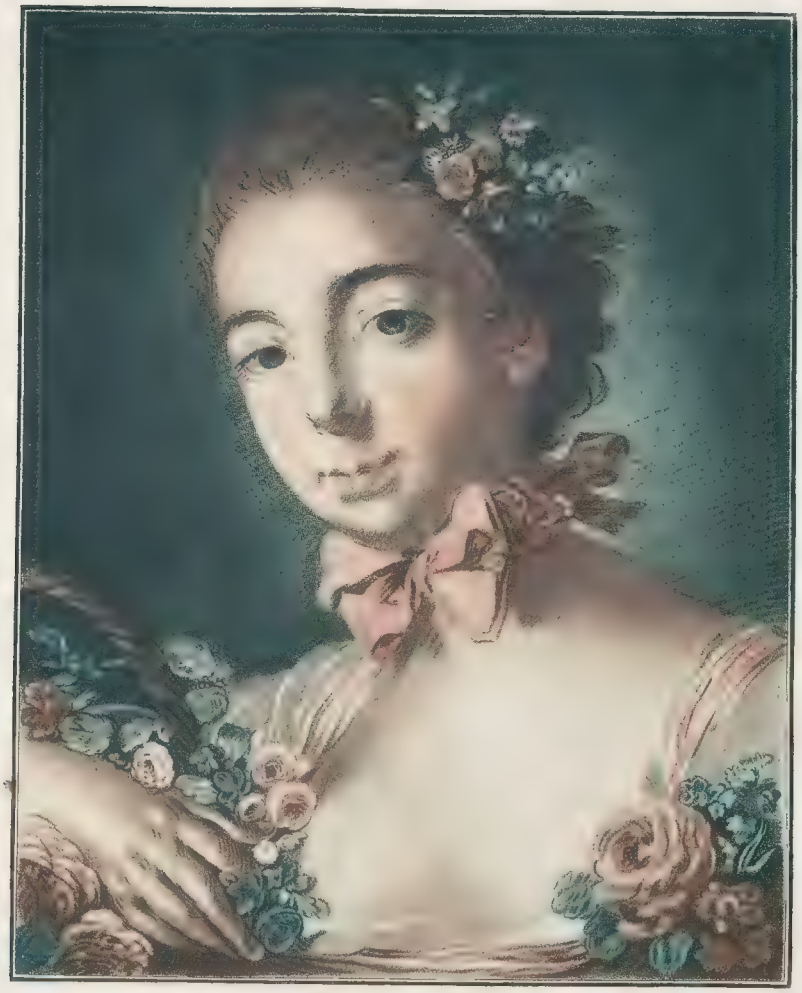
First state.
Coat of arms of Mr. de Bourgogne.

A VENUS hailing from the sportive Olympus of Ovid rather than from the staid mythology of Homer or of Virgil responded to the earthly conceptions of an amorous limner. As shown by the print, the original picture belongs to the master's expensive manner, to which "le Réveil" (No. 55) has called attention. Although intended for an over-door panel of the same character as "Venus, Mercury, and Cupid," now at Potsdam, it was as carefully finished as if to be placed on an easel.

Bourcard, who objects to myths and pastorals, declares that for want of colour the engraved works of Boucher are like fish without sauce. He enumerates 101 plates after him with no other mention but the respective titles, regardless of the artistic and representative merit of most of them.

TÉTE DE FLORE.

By L. M. Bonnet. After F. Boucher



TÊTE DE FLORE.

56[A].

TÊTE DE FLORE

Engraved and printed in colours by Louis Marin Bonnet in 1769

Second state.

IN competition with the "Jeune Fille à la Rose" by Demarteau (No. 52) this is one of the two finest specimens of pastel engraving in the eighteenth century and the masterpiece of Bonnet, who, to add to the illusion of an original, reproduced the signature of Boucher with the date 1757 on the background of the work; he also printed his own name and the date 1769 on the lower left corner in black, in imitation of chalk writing. The number 192 on the top right corner corresponds with the catalogue of his stock-in-trade.

Modern iconology discards a tradition to which the Louvre Museum still adheres, that this is an allegorical portrait of Pompadour at thirty-six years of age. As may be seen on the print of "la belle Jardinière" after Vanloo (No. 330), which is rather similar in composition, there is no resemblance between the oval of the face, the shape of the eyes, nose, and mouth of the Marquise, and the sheepish features of a Flora, who at her best may have been looked upon as a *beaute du diable*, young, beaming, and fresh, though prematurely made up. The main argument in support of the likeness is a ribbon round the lady's throat.

Mr. Danlos, who described the same print and its companion in the Della Torre sale of 1914 as having long been supposed to represent Madame de Pompadour and Mlle. Coypel, thinks there can be no doubt as to the real identity of both sitters. He begins by quoting the following passage from Baudicour's "Peintre Graveur," vol. ii, p. 38. "Besides an infinite number of drawings a few charming pastels are "also due to Boucher, among others those of his two daughters, admirably executed "and now in my collection." Then he adds: "These were the pastels—once the "property of Soufflot, the architect—engraved by Bonnet. In 1805 Pierre Lelu, "an old pupil of Boucher, had advised Baudicour, then fifteen years of age, to buy "them and had assured him that they were the originals by the Master, whom "he had seen painting them and that they represented Mme. Deshayes and "Mme. Baudouin."

Mr. Danlos relates no second-hand information. His authority was Baudicour's own son, who about two score years ago sold to him one of the two pictures, that of Boucher's eldest daughter. The whereabouts of the other original is unknown.

Two "Têtes de Flore" at the Louvre are school replicas, in spite of their labels, so are three similar versions in private collections, one of them in America. The first state of Bonnet's imitation was probably nearer to the Master's own work than several contemporary copies of such a popular subject.

Without adducing arguments Bourcard, who ignores one companion print and finds no attraction in the other, is content to say that nothing warrants the suppositions put forward as to the identity of this head. He grows unusually witty over its boasted rarity and, having often seen it at sales, he wonders whether the same impression could possibly keep on reappearing under the hammer of different auctioneers. Goncourt does not comment upon it, except to enter it as a presumed portrait of Madame de Pompadour after Boucher, so does Mr. Beraldi in "Mes Estampes."

No French colour print possesses so complete a life history as this one does, and no chrysalis ever turned more openly into a brilliant butterfly. The various stages in the printing process which brought about gradually the complete metamorphosis of the work may be followed closely on a unique record preserved at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, once the Library of d'Argenson, Marquis de Paulmy; a large thin book, handsomely bound in red morocco, bearing on each side the royal arms. The title "le Pastel en gravure" on the back is repeated in manuscript on the front page with the additional statement: "inventé et executé par Louis Bonnet 1768." Next come the eight successive and partial impressions of the subject, taken from as many plates which were superimposed in turn one on the other, each bearing different colours, from the first showing the portrait head as a blurred and ghostly apparition to the finished and full-blown state before letters as fresh as if just lifted off the press. Each trial proof faces a hand-written explanation of the application of the corresponding colours in the following terms:

I. Proof from the first plate, printed with green and blue; with green to obtain the reflected lights, with blue to convey the transparency of the blood through the skin, also to prepare the background and a portion of the flowers.

II. Proof from the second plate resulting from the impression of the first and second. The latter is printed with white, also with a little lake and carmine intended to yield a pale flesh colour; the grain of its impression is very thick because it will eventually be crushed and made appropriately even when this plate has gone six times under the press.

III. Proof from the first two and the third plate. This is printed with dark blue to finish the background of the picture, a portion of the flowers, the apple and crystalline part of the eyes. The work seems coarse, but will be softened by the compression of the other plates.

IV. Proof from the first three and the fourth plate. This is printed with a

delicate lake intended to give sanguine tints and to break the first colours. Green and yellow serve to paint the bouquets.

V. Proof from the fifth plate printed with a bistred colour intended to draw the outlines, to give the shadows and melt the flesh tints. The bistre and umbered pastels used in the picture could not serve to print this plate, as they are dull and opaque. All the author's work was lost. At last, after no end of researches, he discovered the use of petrified wood crushed into powder, and succeeded with it.

VI. Proof from the sixth plate printed with carmine to give the last red tints.

VII. Proof from the seventh, printed with very dark brown. This determines the outlines and gives the last touch to the shadows. It has been handled so as to yield a hard tint to be softened by the last plate.

VIII. Proof from the eighth and last, printed with white to supply the lights to the picture, to soften the harshness of the blacks and determine the acridity of the reds. This is the most important and difficult colour to treat. The whites used so far are apt to turn either yellow or black; but the author discovered several years ago a white which is not liable to such a drawback and which has served to give the last value to his work.

To all appearances this invaluable document, probably a presentation copy, is connected with the correspondence exchanged in September 1769—five years after the death of Madame de Pompadour—between her brother, Marigny, Director General of the Board of Works, and Cochin, Superintendent of the Royal Academy. With the King's approval, Marigny had instructed Cochin to determine the amount of a gratuity to be paid to Bonnet. In his fine courtly style, after commending a precedent "which is bound to stimulate the progress of the Fine arts, to promote "discoveries and lead to improvements," Cochin suggests the sum of 50 louis "considering that Bonnet had to use as many as eight plates and needs such a "bounty to cover a portion of the expenses incurred." To which Marigny replies that as he has given orders accordingly, the news can be conveyed to "Mr. Bonnet, "inventor of the art of engraving in imitation of pastel."

Shades of Arthur Pond, of François, of Demarteau. No doubt so tangible and official a recognition strengthened in the mind of Bonnet the auto-suggestion thanks to which he had already styled himself as the discoverer of this method. "He did not find its principle," writes Mr. Courboin, "but he greatly amplified the "application of it by means of eight plates and was able to reproduce even the "grain, the velvety surface, the very dust of the originals."

That the eighth plate was the most difficult to prepare is confirmed by a comparison between the first and the second states of this engraving. Only on the extremely rare unlettered impressions strong streaks of white supply the high lights on the flesh of Flora, and her hair is powdered. When inscription and

number came to be inserted, the illusion of a genuine pastel was no longer the same, because Bonnet, by dispensing with the use of a particular pigment which involved more labour and care, deprived his work of the finishing touches on which he had laid stress in describing the last stage of the process.

A supplementary yellow plate, referred to occasionally as lacking on some impressions of the "Tête," has existed only in the imagination of restorers. Bonnet accounted for a few touches of yellow on his fourth trial proof, and had no further recourse to it. When the hair of this eighteenth century Mother of Spring inclines to be sandy, however plausible the effect may be, the print is sure to have been retouched, if with art not with discretion.

Reverting now to the identity of the sitter, Marie Emilie was the Christian name of the youngest daughter of François Boucher and of Marie Jeanne Buseau. Born in 1740, she sat for her father in the garb of a rather unconventional Flora at the age of seventeen, one year before she married Baudouin, the best *gouache* painter of all times, the Master of the "Couché de la mariée." Her wedding took place on the same day—8 April 1758—as that of her elder sister, Jeanne Elizabeth Victoire, the wife of Deshayes, an artist of great promise who died in his prime.

The pastel in the possession of Mr. Danlos represents the future Mme. Deshayes as her winsome self, without any mythological pretences. Bonnet's rendering of it, more rarely met with, is not so remarkable and sparkling as his standard imitation of its companion. Bought at the Halsey sale, the impression of the "Tête de Flore" before us has been added to this collection to make further amends for Mr. Christophle's decided objection to all facsimiles of drawings due to an imitative process, whether single-toned or in colours.

ANGÉLIQUE BRICEAU

57.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

Engraved by Madame Briceau, printed in colours

First state.

THE daughter of a burinist, Angélique BRICEAU (?-1833), herself a fair engraver, contributed some portraits of Revolutionary celebrities to a publication undertaken by Allais, her husband, in competition with Alix's remarkable series of aquatint medallions of "great men," between 1790 and 1797.

In rarity this print outdoes the effigy of the same virago by Alix; but to compare the features and age represented on both likenesses is to put the authenticity of Mme. Briceau's model to a severe test. As Charlotte Corday was utterly unknown to Parisians before her trial, and as Garneray made a sketch of her there,[1] Alix's reproduction of the latter should be held as an iconographic document beyond dispute, while several posthumous pictures of the Girondin heroine present merely a sentimental interest.

Referring in 1887 to an unlettered impression of this "important, uncommon "and fine colour print" in the Beraldi collection, Bourcard termed it "more modest "and mature" than the other well-known portrait. When a similar specimen turned up in 1904 at the De Meeus sale, again Bourcard laid stress on its *excessive* rarity, especially if a screen subsequently added be not yet visible in the background of the oval.

Next to the execution of Louis XVI, and three months before that of Queen Marie Antoinette, the assassination of Marat caused by contrast an enormous sensation, reflected throughout Europe in the popular demand for more or less imaginary pictures of the deed. As the English sense of propriety could not countenance the notion of the bloodthirsty tyrant having been done to death in his bath by a girl, Pellegrini drew, and Schiavonetti engraved, a Marat becomingly stabbed on a couch.

By entering this portrait under the name of Angélique Briceau we conform to a vague tradition that the print is by as well as after her. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence to show that the engraver was also the painter.

[1] Not so Moreau le Jeune, to whom the elaborate catalogue of the Wellesley drawings, sold at Sotheby's in June 1920, attributed, without the slightest foundation, a feeble oval sketch of Charlotte Corday and qualified it as "of capital interest to French collectors."

JACQUES PHILIPPE CARESME

58.

LA PETITE THÉRÈSE

Engraved by Jacques Couché

Second state.
Coat of arms of Mme. de Blangermon.

CARESME (1734-1796), a pupil of Charles Antoine Coypel, saw his candidature to the Academy cancelled for having refused to paint a portion of the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon at the Louvre. Of the drawings for it exhibited by him at the Salon of 1767, Diderot wrote: "A great master would not disown them." His supple talent and elegant touch vied with the best artists of the day on portraits, still life, mythological and *genre* subjects, many of the latter *à la gouache.* A fairly good burinist, he engraved some Revolutionary scenes, having turned from a militant Royalist into a fiery Jacobin.

By interpreting "la petite Thérèse" as a companion to "la Fuite à dessein" (No. 154), Couché sets off the obvious effort of Caresme to imitate Fragonard with a far less poetical conception of a similar composition. Since the youth in pursuit has already caught the girl, little was left to the bystander's imagination.

The print is rare.

L'AMANT SURPRIS

By C. M. Descourtis. After C. M. A. Challe

CHARLES MICHEL-ANGE CHALLE

59.

L'AMANT SURPRIS

Engraved by Charles Melchior Descourtis; printed in colours

First state.

THE son-in-law of Nattier, CHALLE (1718-1778), a better architect and mathematician than a painter, lectured on perspective at the Academy, translated Piranesi into French, and left many essays on the fine arts, long ago forgotten. To Boucher, his master, he owed his large decorative manner, and to a certain extent that profusion of details and shrubberies with which he was wont to overload his compositions. His ceilings were more successful than his easel pictures, the best of which, "l'Amant surpris," has been improved upon in the capital interpretation due to Descourtis, though the colours are somewhat raw and the figure of the lover taken by surprise while reading his correspondence betrays Challe's deficiencies as a draughtsman. Thanks to a painter's fancy for luxuriant vegetation, no garden scene could have displayed to better advantage the engraver's skill. In that respect the print is justly renowned.

60.

LE PANIER RENVERSÉ

Engraved by C. A. L. Buisson

First state.

BUISSON is merely quoted by Portalis and Beraldi as the engraver of this composition, without any date or biographical detail. Bourcard refers to the print as being sought after before letters, and mentions a few impressions in bistre. Ruotte engraved the same subject without success.

LE PANIER RENVERSÉ

By C. A. L. Buisson. After C. M. A. Challe

JEAN-BAPTISTE SIMÉON CHARDIN

(1699-1779)

THE son of a billiard-table maker, and the pupil of Coypel, he is not so much a French eighteenth-century artist as the only artist of pure French race and type who showed no trace of the influence of Watteau: the painter of a pre-Revolutionary *bourgeoisie*, staid as yet and contented, whose children in revolt were to bring forth a new order of things.

The domestic genius of CHARDIN, as immune from the corruption of the time, is unique, and prompts him to strike true with simple anecdotes, now touching, now matter-of-fact, now humorously sly. His instructive power of observation in the full light of day, shuns the glare of opera chandeliers and the sumptuous background of high fashion with its questionable scenes. In preference he goes for his subjects to the schoolroom, to kitchens and sculleries, where even his "still life" breathes forth an honest scent, as if to underline an intense feeling for the pathos of humanity in its humble cares: a striking contrast to the indiscretions of Baudouin and the sentimentality of Greuze.

He must have learnt much from Rembrandt, from Metsu, and Fyt: more so from Willem Kalf, whose works he had the opportunity of studying in the collection of De la Roque, the amateur with a wooden leg immortalized by Watteau.[1] Yet if in all the world's galleries there be a picture from which Chardin's art more distinctly hails—consciously or not—it is "The Milkmaid," by Vermeer of Delft.[2]

Diderot, in his outspoken accounts of annual exhibitions, greeted him as a reformer, happily influenced by Dutch naturalists, though distinctly averse to coarseness: "His work some day will be sought after. If Latour is bound to be "spoken of, then Chardin will surely arrest the eye; his paintings are too "straightforward to be overlooked. He is our great colourist, our sublime "technician: he is Nature itself."[3]

After devoting a few years to compositions of still or inanimate objects, he

gave way to the genuine vein of a painter of homely life with pictures of daily toil and mild joys, of resigned mediocrity and tranquil contentment. Without stooping to vulgarity, he sought inspiration in the modest environment of his own affections and habits. Puritanical-looking women, and demure girls and boys, their instinctive deportment, plain dress, and simple furniture, every one of Chardin's characters and accessories is rendered with a penetrating adherence to Nature, and a directness which rise to the dignity of a style. Thus the master, in the advanced capacity, as it were, of an austere Moreau le Jeune below stairs, has preserved for posterity in a series of images the wholesome virtues he himself revered, by setting off the composure of his figures and lines within an atmosphere of integrity and thrift.

His was the genius of the hearth. The revival of domestic scenes, discarded in French art since the time of Abraham Bosse and the Le Nains, made the fortune of his name. "No woman of the third estate of the realm," wrote Chamarande in a quaint epistle on the Salon of 1741, "stands before one of "Chardin's canvases without discerning a reflection of her own morals, manners, "and daily avocations, of the ways of her children, of her household gods and "wardrobe."

Celebrity came early to him: prosperity never. Already in the eighteenth century it was given to few to be prophets or good "sellers" at home, and, while the Master lived, his works, though eagerly bought, were not boomed. At the great La Roque sale of 1745 his "Laundress" and "Fountain" (Nos. 61, 62) did not fetch more than 482 livres—barely £19—a bid upon which Chardin ever after based his calculations. A bad hand at the commercial side of his calling, by nature devoid of acquisitiveness, the rise in prices paid by foreigners for pictures did not affect him. At the height of success, patronized by Catherine II, by Prince Liechtenstein and, through Count de Tessin, by the Queen of Sweden,[4] he adhered to his early charges and never tried to allay the straitened circumstances of his home by playing one rich amateur against the other. Painting, he used to say, is an island of which he could but hug the shore, since work cost him superhuman efforts.

Prints established his popularity beyond the pale of exhibitions throughout French Europe, as Marquis Caracciolo, that worshipper of Parisian wit and taste, would call the world he moved in.[5] Few painters found such intuitive interpreters as Chardin did. Duplessis suggests that either the Master himself

superintended them, or that the engravers captivated by the quality of his execution, must have seized instinctively on the essential beauty of his art. Cochin father and son, the two Surugues, Lebas, Fessard, Lépicié, Filloeul, masters of the burin somewhat unappreciated as yet, turned from Watteau's nervous touch, open skies, and sparkling fairy scenes, to the restful lights of Chardin, to his supple backgrounds and buttery whites, to the undisturbed harmony of his stern interiors. If no still life by him, not even his Rembrandtian "skate" tempted them, they made a rush for his domestic scenes the moment they appeared, with the unavoidable exception of his largest composition, "Sick Man's Fare," removed to Vienna by Prince Liechtenstein almost before it dried.

Thus, owing to the sympathetic apprehension of engravers, Chardin became a leading feature of home decoration, long before racy prints after Baudouin, Lavreince, and Fragonard had encroached upon the respectability of subjects drawn either from history or from nursery tales.

A price-list of Lebas in 1770 enters the "Négligé," after Chardin, at half a livre, "The Lady sealing a letter" at one livre, while numbers of inferior reproductions even of spurious Chardins—mostly made in Germany—satisfied popular demand.[6]

Cheapness helped the vogue, until Jacobin intolerance raised the academic standard in favour of stilted heroics, and all *genre* prints were doomed in their turn—a cheaper target than pictures. Chardin somehow seems to have borne the worst shock from a creed before which "A Maid peeling turnips" or "A Boy building a house of cards," discharged no duties of citizenship.[7] Thus, as if taste up to the close of the eighteenth century had amounted to mere fashion, France for over fifty years disavowed the true sons of her genius, her temperament, and wit. The art of Louis XV, more so even than that of Louis XVI, found its way to second-hand stalls on the quays of the Seine: paintings, drawings, engravings went bashfully a-begging as "reach me downs" of a worn-out school. David's apprentices at the Academy threw bread balls at Watteau's "Embarquement," that dream of light banished to a copy room,[8] the "Rousseau" of Latour was withdrawn from an auction at three francs; Chardin's "Draughtsman" and "Tapestry worker" fetched forty francs; his own and his wife's portraits in pastels, now at the Louvre, were sold for twenty-four. "But, after all," ask the Goncourts, "what do prices and vogue matter? Our generation has "permanently reinstated Watteau as a painter of the first order; Latour is held as

" one of the cleverest draughtsmen that ever lived, nor is much courage needed " nowadays to hail Chardin a great artist."

[1] Antoine de la ROQUE (1672-1744), a highly cultured officer in the Royal Body Guards, having lost one leg at Malplaquet, obtained in 1721 the privilege of the " Mercure galant," renamed by him " Mercure de France," to which he contributed many good articles on art matters scattered over 321 volumes. He also undertook, but never brought out, a series of memoirs on distinguished artists. Gersaint published the catalogue of his fine collection of pictures. Watteau, whom he patronized, painted his portrait, which was engraved by Lépicié.

[2] Together with the " View of Delft " at the Hague, " The Milkmaid," once in the Six collection now at the Amsterdam Museum, belongs to the early period of the career of Jan van der MEER (1623-1675), a painter well-nigh forgotten for more than two hundred years, until Thoré re-discovered him in the second half of the nineteenth century. A singular completeness and charm; beauty of tone and perfect harmony; a crisp, sparkling, and vigorous touch; a great command over the resources of colour, with a preference for lemon-yellow and blue of all shades, mark the work of Vermeer. His figures move in light and air with a wonderful expression of life.

[3] In his introduction to " A Selection of Pictures from public and private Collections," engraved by Reveil in 1832, Duchesne remarked: " Curiously enough Hogarth, a contemporary of Chardin, makes no " mention of him in his Notes on painting, and maintains that the French school did not even produce a mediocre colourist." As a matter of fact Hogarth's verdict is not to be wondered at when one remembers the gallophobia of an essentially insular painter who dabbled in aesthetics, and presumed to lay down the laws of taste, while overcrowding his own unattractive compositions with figures, bric-a-brac, intentions, and coarseness.

[4] CATHERINE II (1729-1796), the Semiramis of the North, a woman of compact character, great ability, and no morals, who boasted of being " frank and original as any Englishman," ruled Russia after the murder of Paul III, her husband, from 1762 to 1796, amid the loyalty of the people and the admiration of her neighbours. She dipped with lively curiosity into many books, and spent money freely in the purchase of works of art for the Ermitage at Petrograd.

Joseph William, Sovereign Prince of the diminutive state of LIECHTENSTEIN (1696-1772), an Austrian field marshal and an ambassador to France from 1738 till 1745, devoted a large portion of his wealth to two very different pursuits—the improvement of the Austrian artillery and the formation of a picture gallery in Vienna, which is up to this day the most important private collection in Europe.

Count TESSIN (1695-1770), Swedish ambassador in Paris from 1739 to 1742, delighted Versailles with his brilliant qualities of a grand seigneur, renewed the traditional alliance between France and his country, and was looked upon as the most prominent representative of French culture in Sweden. Having escorted to Stockholm Louisa Ulrica, sister of Frederick the Great, the bride of Adolphus Frederick, Swedish Crown Prince, he became the friend and adviser of the royal pair, for whom he made in France the most judicious purchases of pictures.

[5] The Marquis Domenico CARACCIOLO (1715-1789), a man of letters and an economist, was Neapolitan envoy in England and France, then Viceroy of Sicily, where he abolished torture, and finally Foreign Minister. His correspondence with Grimm, Marmontel, Diderot, and D'Alembert teems with anecdotes and witty sayings. At the time of the quarrel between Glückists and Puccinists he upheld his countryman, while making fun of Parisian infatuation for music: " French ears are lined with morocco leather."

[6] Having picked out " The Lady sealing a letter," " Good Education," " The Study of drawing," and three more as rare and sought after, Bourcard wrote in 1893: " The engraved works of Chardin present " but a secondary importance, since amateurs do not wax fervid over them at auctions and prices shrink " accordingly." After a lapse of thirty years or so, under the influence of a more discriminating market, this statement sounds foolish. The fact is that fine impressions of Chardin prints have become as rare as they are expensive; the only complete set of them in existence is in the collection of Mr. Irwin Laughlin at Washington.

7 There is a story that Chardin's brother and heir, an honest grocer, turned a whole lot of engravings after him into stout wrappings for beans and sugar.

8 "Lettres d'un Artiste," Bergeret, Paris, 1848. As a fine arts dictator under the Revolution, DAVID (1748-1825) crushed the school of Boucher as well as the opinions of Diderot, admitting of no difference between sensuality and sensitiveness in art. He raised to a doctrine the imitation of classic models and the contempt of all subjects not strictly patriotic, to begin with Flemish and Dutch *genre* scenes, "which distorted mankind." To the most independent of his pupils: "You wretch," he cried, "you will be the "Boucher of the new century," a condemnation which for years to come turned into reprobates the most exquisite exponents of the French genius, and, on the other hand, enabled Mr. Lacaze to purchase Watteau's "Gilles" for six hundred francs. It must be acknowledged, however, that with his pure drawing David reacted against mannerism, and that some portraits by him, when he forgot Athens and Rome in favour of nature, are admirable.

61, 62.

LA BLANCHISSEUSE—LA FONTAINE

A pair engraved by Charles Nicolas Cochin in 1739

First finished states, before Cochin's address "sur le Pont Notre Dame" was altered to that of Basan.
Bocher, Nos. 6 and 21.

THE original pictures on oak panels, dated 1733, commissioned by Mr. de la Roque and exhibited at the Louvre in 1737, under the title of "A Maid drawing water from a tap" and "A Girl busy soaping," are now in the Stockholm Museum, wrecks past repair, having suffered cruelly from the heat of a stove in the Royal palace. Still, as here and there the superb quality of the whites and rose reds have survived, it is evident from the prints that both compositions, perhaps the most popular by the Master, must have shown him in the full possession of his powers. Thanks to them, French taste, long deprived of domestic subjects in art, took to a new simplicity of truth and delighted in the striking reality imparted to homely scenes by the powerful rendering of commonplace accessories which, under such telling drawing, assumed the projective fullness and the self-assertiveness of three dimensions.

Having been received at the Academy in 1728 as a painter of flowers, fruit, and "conventional subjects," the story goes that it took years before Chardin was induced to attempt figures by a teasing question of Aved, the portraitist: "Do "you imagine portraits to be as easily painted as sausages?" Whereupon "The Fountain" would have been produced as a retort.

The anecdote must be discarded. That the artist's transition from the rendering of inanimate to that of animate life could not be so prodigiously sudden is now ascertained by chronology. Not only do we know that in the second stage of his work he took up monkeys as rough outlines of human sitters, but besides confronting this gradual evolution with that startling assertion, we actually find upon Fessard's print of "The Lady sealing a letter," the date of 1732, one year previous to that inscribed upon the panel of "The Fountain." Yet that attractive "Lady" was too successful herself to be accepted as the first outcome of the third period. Before her, in order of time, came "A Girl teasing a spaniel," a diluted pre-Fragonardesque sort of Chardin; then "A Boy blowing soap bubbles," a sincere though somewhat flat study from life, now at Petrograd, of which three replicas

days are substitutes for artists—has ascertained conclusively that the "Fountain" and "Laundress," as the embodiment of the painter's progress, revealed the plenitude of his *bourgeoise* vein and established his reputation at thirty-four years of age. The complete Chardin was there already, in every corner of "Two Kitchens," as the pair was popularly called: "fit to hang," wrote Diderot, whose eyes could see and perceive, "next to the greatest of small *Flemish* Masters." He meant the Dutch: De Hoogh, Terburg, Dow, Metsu, Teniers, Van Ostade, the latter of whom, half a century before, Louis XIV had ostracized at first sight: "Remove from our royal presence these low baboons."

There is in the La Caze room at the Louvre a signed study for "la Fontaine," and at the Ermitage at Petrograd a luminous replica of "la Blanchisseuse."

The "Mercure de France" advertised both prints in 1739: "Mr. Cochin has "so skilfully engraved the happiest pair of Chardin's compositions in the style of "Teniers, that his work deserves as much admiration as was elicited at the Salon "by the originals of 'The Laundress' and 'The Fountain.'"

63.

LA BONNE ÉDUCATION

Engraved by Jacques Philippe Lebas in 1757

First state.
Bocher, No. 7.

Lebas (1707-1783) had been the pupil of Tardieu senior. In the same years as his once fellow-student, Laurent Cars, though with a different spirit, he renovated the art of engraving and extended its scope to *genre* subjects. Diderot taxed him with having given a blow to classical methods for the sake of despatching a huge quantity of work undertaken at low prices. The fact is that while accentuating the picturesque touch of Tardieu, Lebas developed through extreme facility a licence of execution which sacrificed professional distinction to commercial considerations. An expeditious technique, however, did not stand in the way of full honours, for he was received by the Academy, appointed engraver to the King, and patronized by the Crozats, great amateurs.[1]

Conducted more like a home than a school, his workshop contributed to his popularity. The real value of his tuition attracted young craftsmen almost as much as the boisterous kindness of a master who, deeply interested in his pupils, spared neither rewards nor rebukes. Thus, during the most essential period of the century, Lebas exerted a preponderant influence over the various developments of his calling, and formed a legion of excellent burinists: Cochin junior, Moreau le Jeune, Eisen, Masquelier, Lemire, Godefroy, Malbeste, Choffard, De Longueil, Martini, Cathelin, Helmann, Gaucher, Aliamet. Drawn by the reputation of the house, Ryland and Strange came over from England to be under his training, as did Rehn, the Swedish draughtsman and architect. A man of infinite jest, his last words as he lay dying were quoted: "the edifice is crumbling."

Lebas engraved all sorts of subjects. At a period when the works of the Bolognese school and of minor Dutch painters formed the nucleus of most galleries, he reproduced with untiring and tiresome perseverance numbers of Teniers interiors, kermesses, and Flemish country scenes, which he considered as his finest works.

The original picture of "la Bonne Éducation," the replica of one previously painted by Chardin for the Queen of Sweden and now at Drotningholm, was

shown at the Louvre[1] in 1753 as "A Girl reciting the gospel," and paired with "The Student of drawing" (No. 70), also engraved by Lebas.

[1] Pierre CROZAT (1661-1740), one of a family of prominent financiers and Treasurer to the King, formed a superb collection of works of art which descended to his nephews, Louis and Antoine, and were dispersed after their death, a large number going to Petrograd in 1770. Between 1729 and 1742 two volumes of one hundred and seventy-eight prints, reproducing the finest pictures in France, were published as "Le Cabinet Crozat."

64.

LE CHÂTEAU DE CARTES

Engraved by Pierre Filloeul in 1737

Only state.
Bocher, No. 21.

THE work of FILLOEUL, the son of an engraver who died in 1751, is principally known through ten illustrations after Pater and Lemesle for the Larmessin suite of La Fontaine's tales (No. 335). The only date quoted in Portalis and Beraldi's notice of him is that of 1736, when his first print appeared. Three plates after Chardin are due to him. Of the interpretation of Pater's pictures he made a speciality, but failed in his rendering of "la Danse."

The original "Château de cartes," now in the La Caze room at the Louvre, exhibited in 1737, was said to be the portrait of the son of Lenoir, a merchant, Chardin's best man at his first marriage. The Master reproduced and altered it three times; Aveline and Lépicié, besides Filloeul, interpreted it in each case, always adhering to the breathless wonderment of the boy before his scaffolding of cards. The rhyme under the print is uncommonly to the point: "Why laugh at "a boy's useless and unsteady labour, you grey-haired boasters of wisdom who "raise in your mind far more foolish castles?"

Chardin's popularity in England may be inferred from the fact that subscribers to the "British Magazine" for January 1762 received as a bonus the engraving of this composition by Lépicié.

DAME CACHETANT UNE LETTRE

By E. Fessard. After J. B. S. Chardin

Chardin Pinx 1738

Hâte toy donc, Frontain: vois ta jeune Maîtresse,
Sa tendre impatience éclate dans ses yeux;
Il lui tarde déjà que l'objet de ses Vœux

Ait reçu ce Billet, gage de sa tendresse?
Ah! Frontain, pour agir avec cette lenteur
Jamais le Dieu d'Amour n'a donc touché ton cœur

[illegible] chez Vassard Rue St Denis au grand St Hubert [illegible]

65.

DAME CACHETANT UNE LETTRE

Engraved by ETIENNE FESSARD in 1738

First state, before Fessard's address, "at the mirror maker, near the Sepulchre," was replaced by that of Joullain.
Bocher, No. 12.

FESSARD (1714-1777) was the pupil of Jeaurat, the painter who had set up as Chardin's competitor. Gifted with a facile burin and plenty of push and conceit, he spoilt the reputation which this "Lady sealing a letter" had won him by presuming to obtain the exclusive privilege of engraving the Royal pictures. A born courtier, he contrived to stand well with great people and secured the patronage of Madame de Pompadour by dedicating to her a print of "Venus disarming Love" after Boucher, as well as the portraits of her pet dogs, "Ines and Mimi," otherwise "Fidelity and Constancy." Fessard worked much, intrigued still more, and was involved in various actions at law against men of his profession. On the whole, his best contribution to French art was considered to be Augustin de St. Aubin himself, who, before entering the *atelier* of Cars, had been taught by him.

If you play fair, without looking at the letters under the print, you will hesitate before associating Chardin with the amorous elegance, the half-seen fleeting profile, the lovely neck and soft hair, crowned by a top-knot of lace, of this aristocratic lady: with the affluence suggested by a liveried footman: even with the high-bred greyhound caressing or scratching the silk gown of his coquettish mistress.

De Troy, the modish painter of the Régence—that *déshabillé* of the reign of Louis XIV—might almost have suggested a composition to which Chardin imparted his keen touch of nature, with the truthful though trying expression on the valet's face, who seems to be in no hurry to light the candle, perhaps because he cannot understand that writing, sealing, and despatching a letter are Love's labour and brook no delay. Thence the rhyme under the print: "Either you fail to see "what fever Madame is in for the note to reach her swain, or Cupid has never "tried your heart."

Under an unusual aspect and though dated as early as 1732, the picture, an uncompromising mosaic of colour, shows the hand of Chardin already at his strongest. What mars its spontaneity is a red curtain descending from nowhere, gathered up in the prescribed style, the sort of hanging which would have com-

pleted an official portrait by Rigaud. Put in without conviction, this superfluous drapery imparts an air of unreality to an otherwise perfectly real scene. The intentional asperities of the brush work have been admirably rendered by Fessard on the print.

To lovers of highly-flavoured eighteenth-century game, it may be a source of regret that Chardin, as he groped about, feeling for his own calling in art, did not linger awhile in this lady's boudoir, seeking inspiration among her alluring surroundings for fashionable, if not suggestive, scenes far removed from his own humble world. Had his psychology tended that way, we would have gained one more painter of the joy of living under Louis XV—their name was legion—only to miss the exception, that genius of honest firesides, Chardin.

The catalogue of the Carlsruhe Museum mentioned "A Lady sealing" down to the year 1855, when its traces, somehow, were lost, until Mr. A. Danlos, not very long ago, identified in a bedroom of the Neue Palais at Potsdam the same composition, possibly a replica, as in many other instances, by the Master himself.

In May 1738 the "Mercure de France" advertised "the piquancy of Fessard's "engraving, its truthful interpretation of that happy contrast of expressions which "makes the success of Chardin's picture, now shown at the Salon." A reversed reproduction of inferior workmanship by Aug. Wind appeared shortly afterwards in Germany, with a pompous Teutonic and Latin paraphrase of the French rhyme.

The circular mark "G.B." on the back of this impression is that of Mr. G. Berard of Lyons, whose choice collection was sold by auction in 1892. The print is exceedingly rare. The Dobrée Museum at Nantes has a fourth state of it with the address of Bligny, not mentioned by Bocher.

66, 67.

LE DESSINATEUR—L'OUVRIÈRE EN TAPISSERIE

A pair engraved by JEAN JACQUES FLIPART in 1757

The etchings.
Bocher, Nos. 14 and 40.

THAT considerable master, Laurent Cars, said that of all his pupils, Boucher and Peronneau included, FLIPART (1719-1782) alone had understood his lessons, and that his uncommon powers of assimilation enabled him to interpret the most different artists. Flipart had a knack of carrying his etchings so far as almost to convey the full effect of a picture, and of finishing them with that minute stippling which facile wits of the day mistook for small-pox marks. To look at these perfect interpretations of a perfect painter is to regret that Flipart soon abandoned Chardin for the works of his friend Greuze.

Both pictures were painted on oak panels for the great amateur de la Roque, at whose sale in 1745 they fetched 100 livres. They were sold again for 882 livres in 1787, with the Bandeville collection, and fell to 24 and 40 francs respectively at the Sylvestre and the Lemoyne auctions in 1811 and 1828, under the influence of "classic taste." The Stockholm Museum has Chardin's replicas of them.

The "Mercure de France" in 1757 advertised "'A Silk winder' and its "companion, two new plates by Flipart at six livres the pair: worthy of praise." Grimm and Diderot's literary correspondence in November 1759 says: "Of "Chardin, the Salon has a young draughtsman and a tapestry worker sorting "her skeins of silk: nature and truth combined. Both small figures, as broadly "treated as if sized by cubits, will be sought after some day."

Mr. Delteil finds fault with the perspective of the model represented as hanging on the wall in the first print, as if it were a figure in full relief.

There is another reproduction of this pair by Cécile Maginet, an eighteenth-century engraver of the gentler sex, by whom very little else is known.

68, 69.

L'ÉCUREUSE—LE GARÇON CABARETIER

A pair engraved by Charles Nicolas Cochin the Elder in 1740

First finished states, before the mention "du Cabinet du Comte de Vence" was erased.
Bocher, Nos. 16 and 22.

THE reputation of COCHIN (1688-1754) the Elder as a burinist has been overshadowed by that of his son, after whom book illustrations were actually termed "cochins." And yet old Cochin, like Flipart, grasped with quick-witted intuition the spirit and style of the very dissimilar masters, from Watteau to Chardin, after whom he engraved. "L'Écureuse" and "le Cabaretier," "la Blanchisseuse" and "la Fontaine" (Nos. 61, 62) are among his best works, and the Academy minutes of 1740 acknowledge his gift of four proofs under those titles.

Both the original pictures were exhibited at the Louvre in 1738, one as "The Maid scouring a frying-pan with a wad of straw," the other as "A Scullion cleaning a jar in a tub." Prodigiously luminous, they struck an unprecedented symphony of warm whiteness made of *white* white, grey white, and rusty white, before which, years afterwards, Decamps, whose work showed the Chardin tradition, used to mutter: "His whites, those whites . . . if only I could discover "their formula."

A reproduction of the "Scullery Maid" in reverse and with several alterations, engraved by Zanelly, bears the flat legend: "Look at Mlle. Manon, scouring a "kettle."

L'ÉTUDE DU DESSIN

By J. P. Lebas. After J. B. S. Chardin

ETUDE DU DESSEIN

Par son très humble et

70.

L'ÉTUDE DU DESSIN

Engraved by JACQUES PHILIPPE LEBAS in 1757

Second state.
Coat of arms of the Queen of Sweden (Wasa and Hesse-Cassel).
Bocher, No. 18.

THE most important of four compositions[1] on a theme beloved by Chardin, as the evocation of his apprenticeship "betwixt light and truth," under Coypel; the picture which in his lifetime fetched the second highest price at an auction of his works, 720 livres (about £30), along with "Good education" (No. 63). The original of this particular version of "The Student" is at the Royal Palace of Drotningholm.

Plain, scanty, and picturesque, the accessories and still life of a studio, where shadows play, lent themselves familiarly to the master's brush. Already, in 1738 and 1748, he had exhibited "A Draughtsman" and "A Student"; now, in 1753, on a northern winter day, in a large garret depending for heat upon the *brasero* of old times—mark the pair of pincers—the ever keen pupil, watched by a patron who warms his hands in a muff, draws the "Mercury" of Pigalle and draws it with a purpose: "Mercury fastening wings to his heels," the masterpiece which brought the evolution of sculpture into line with the general movement of the latter half of the eighteenth century, the poetic and noble expression of a new ideal unfettered by canons of mere decoration and the formal surroundings of Versailles. When Pigalle[2] realized his conception of the "Messenger God," "he "was inspired by one of the few clear visions of human beauty which have ever "visited the eyes of men." With divining insight Chardin, himself a leader of reform, set it off in his new "Étude du Dessin" as the up-to-date academic prototype of renovated aesthetics. To the knowing eye of to-day this print of Lebas, unobtrusive and plain as it may seem, rare and precious as it actually is, reads as a document of art criticism, nay, of the philosophy of French art.

[1] A rare English mezzotint by Faber, published in 1740 "at the Golden Head," reproduced the first of Chardin's "Students of drawing"—exhibited in 1738—a young man leaning on a sheet of paper, in the act of sharpening his pencil. The rhyme under it is signed Lockman: "the happy youth . . . through all "her windings nature must pursue, nor quit the Nymph till he obtain the clue." Chardin painted his fourth "Draughtsman" in 1759.

[2] PIGALLE (1714-1785). The life-size original of his "Mercury," bought by King Frederick II for Sans Souci, and now at the foot of the stairs of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, is the finest eighteenth-century piece of sculpture in Germany. A repetition in lead, damaged by long exposure, stood in the Luxembourg gardens in Paris and is now at the Louvre, next to a marble statuette of it.

71.

JEUNE FILLE AU VOLANT

Engraved by Bernard Lépicié in 1742

Two states: progress proof and lettered impression.
Bocher, No. 29.

TOGETHER with Dubosc and Beauvais, LÉPICIÉ (1698-1755), Secretary for life to the Academy of Painting, engraved Raphael's cartoons, now at Hampton Court. His measured interpretations of Chardin's informal yet masterly scenes are full of interest and simple charm. Having letters more than wit, he would inscribe under his plates such feeble rhymes as in this case:

> No worry, no care: at ease with my wishes,
> Battledore and shuttlecock form all my pleasure.

The original picture, now at the Ermitage at Petrograd, was exhibited at the Louvre in 1737 as a companion to the "Young soldier" (No. 72). By way of setting off the painter's candid power of observation, the "Mercure de France" expressed concern over the careless way in which the girl has pinned on the left end of her apron, even though she seems to bring into her game something of the sober ways of her elders.

A well-known print by J. R. Smith, the first of a set of four,[1] shows a different conception of a similar subject. The bringing-up of the English maid represented gives her more ease and less gravity at battledore, but the coquetry of her expression might almost be of Parisian extraction, as if to call for the bilingual inscription: "A Maid: Une Pucelle"—a most unusual term, the latter; the exclusive property in French of the Maid of Orleans!

[1] "A Maid," "A Wife," "A Widow," "What you will," published in 1791: a decidedly French subject the latter, one that Lavreince and Janinet might have envied.

72.

LE JEUNE SOLDAT

Engraved by CHARLES NICOLAS COCHIN the Elder in 1737

The etching.
Bocher, No. 30.

THE original picture was shown at the Louvre in 1737, under the title: "A little Boy with the attributes of his age." It should be remembered that French boys of the middle class wore girl's clothes long after the aristocracy had adopted for the same age a more masculine garb, after the English fashion.

The second state of this print has a rhyme similar to that inscribed by Lépicié under "The Girl with a shuttlecock" (No. 71); a variant having been fitted to it without great strain of imagination, "a windmill or a drum are all my delight."

73.

LE NÉGLIGÉ, OU LA TOILETTE DU MATIN

Engraved by Jacques Philippe Lebas in 1741

First state.
Bocher, No. 38.

THE original picture, now at Stockholm, was exhibited at the Louvre in 1741; so was the print in the following year. The "Mercure" said: "People take "eagerly to such naïve actions as the furtive glance cast to the looking-glass by a "little girl anxious to see if her mother has made her look pretty. Judging by the "quick sale of the engraving, Lebas seems to have satisfied public taste." An ambitious poem followed, praising the painter and his Swedish patron, Count de Tessin. Neater are the rhymes signed Pesselier under the print itself: "In the "desire and the art of pleasing, women can never quite be babies."

Lebas has rendered admirably the uncertain morning light, before which the candle pales on the dressing-table and the corner-cupboard wakes up, with its clock about to strike seven. This time the furniture and accessories, the figures themselves, point to ease and comfort. Though the mother's black hood and a big prayer book denote Sunday morning, yet costumes so finished, so gracefully tucked up, can scarcely have been donned *only* to go to church; surely the coquettish child looks forward to some less contemplative treat to follow.

Tradition has it that with the very personal beauty of this work Chardin was unfeignedly pleased. Lebas, who knew that for the magic harmony of a picture there can be no recipe, on being asked what instructions the Master had imparted as to the interpretation of his own colours, replied: "To use sentiment." Throughout the eighteenth century no painter had practised the precept better than Chardin himself.

The impression before us is particularly fine.

74.

LA RATISSEUSE

Engraved in 1742 by Bernard Lépicié

Only state.
Bocher, No. 46.

THE original picture shown at the Louvre in 1739 is now at Schleissheim, near Munich; a replica in the Lichtenstein Gallery.

The rhyme under the print, apparently inspired by a forerunner of vegetarians, repines at a new form of gastronomic art which turns food to poison and overlooks the primitive artlessness of vegetables.

Here the still-life implements so familiar to the Master assume the consistency of reality. The engraver has done full justice to that skilled rendering of details which could impart style to chopper and block, and give character to a gourd, a tureen, even to turnips rolling into the glistening water, painted as none but Chardin could paint. Had they not been his earliest models, these kettles, saucepans, and bowls, the obvious decoration of a homely home whence he drew a semi-evangelic inspiration and to which his habits clung for life? Self-made as he was, he seldom searched beyond the toilers from whom he sprang, among whom, who knows, he found unperturbed contentment. Intensely Chardinian are this "Ratisseuse" and her properties.

COUTELLIER

75, 76.

MADEMOISELLE CONTAT—MADEMOISELLE OLLIVIER

By and after COUTELLIER; a pair printed in colours with the Engraver's address

First states.

OF COUTELLIER, a draughtsman and stipple engraver of the second half of the eighteenth century, very little is known, except that he has transmitted to us, on pretty, oval-shaped colour prints, the likenesses of some theatrical stars of his time. A large aquatint by him, reproducing a portrait of Louis XVI, is decidedly inferior.

First states of this pair, of which no proofs exist, are rare: the artist's address which identifies them having soon been altered for that of Mondhare, owing to a commercial transfer. Both were inserted in the edition of "la Folle journée," published in 1785, for they represent two actresses who created great *rôles* in the play characterized by Napoleon as: "The Revolution already in motion."[1]

Mlle. Contat (1760-1813), the wittiest interpreter of Molière, was courted and dreaded by painters and engravers, as she constantly sat for her portrait, and was invariably dissatisfied with the result. She married the nephew of Parny, the "dear Tibullus" of Voltaire, and because of her Royalist opinions was imprisoned during the Reign of Terror. As Suzanne in the "Mariage de Figaro," she made an inimitable pair with Mlle. Ollivier (1765-1788), who, in the part of Cherubin, the smart, precocious page, personified the graces and corruptions of the time, like a French print in the flesh.

Ollivier was then nineteen. Her acting and travesty asserted themselves as feats of refinement under trying circumstances for a girl who of love knew merely what she rehearsed on the stage. She died at twenty-three, in all the flash of success. Her tiny foot, of which she was so proud, hardly left an imprint on the boards of the Comédie Française, though a virginal countenance, as the expression went, a milky complexion, and large dark eyes in contrast with her blonde hair,

had attracted many wooers. As the page who sang in the play: "What grief, what ache within my heart," she set ladies a-dreaming, gentlemen a-pining.[2]

[1] After much opposition on the part of the censor, the first performance, in 1784, of Beaumarchais's "Mariage de Figaro" or "la Folle journée" reached the importance of a political event, and contributed to hurry on the issues that led to the destruction of the Bastille. This sparkling play, a pamphlet of rare audacity, hid its social bearing under a plot dealing with the rivalry between a gentleman and his valet. It endowed the French theatre with an unheard-of character, the friend of all liberties, and was really the manifesto of modern spirit against old institutions, the explosion of the sharpest sallies, a clamorous pleading for reforms and a free press. It ran into as many as sixty-eight consecutive performances, an unprecedented success, and was actually put on the court stage at Trianon: Queen Marie Antoinette and the King's brother, D'Artois, taking parts in it. Royalty toyed with fire.

The plays of Beaumarchais still retain their popularity in Paris and belong to the semi-classic repertory of the Théâtre Français. To American readers Figaro is a familiar type through the great operatic adaptations of Mozart and of Rossini.

[2] Grimm was not smitten with her: "Because of her eyes and her elaborate gowns she fancies her "'washy' complexion will go down; it does not with me as, at the play, I sit close to the stage." Again the old cynic writes: "There are rumours after all of the imminent christening of Ollivier's baby. If I am "consulted, I shall suggest naming it Doctor Crispin in order to avoid a dispute between the mother's "particular friends, Doctor Lassonne and Dazincourt, the actor, who is understudy for the *rôle* of Crispin. "Doesn't that seem equitable and fair?"

77.

MADEMOISELLE MAILLARD

By and after COUTELLIER; printed in colours

Second state.
This portrait belongs to the same series as the preceding pair.

MLLE. MAILLARD (1766-1818), a striking individuality of French lyric art, began her theatrical career at fourteen as a *danseuse*, but her voice having proved to be more remarkable than her capers, she blossomed into an operatic singer. Her uncommonly fine contralto, her presence, dignified action, and penetrating charm, had a wonderful success in Glück's "Orpheus," Piccini's "Dido," and Spontini's "Vestal."

Her eccentricities in private life were a personal advertisement and the talk of Paris. She appeared as the Goddess of Reason at the festivity organized in 1793 by the sect of the Hebertistes against Girondins. She dressed in man's clothes; she fought a duel with an officer because he had spoken disparagingly of his own mistress, and wounded him. But for her nose she might have been happy. The organ of smell was too small for her face, and in the effort of correcting its proportions, she trusted to expensive beauty doctors, and experimented with all sorts of appliances. The expression *pied de nez*—to be snubbed—was turned to her account by good friends.

On leaving the stage in 1813, Mlle. Maillard had an artistic and literary salon of some importance.

CHARLES ANTOINE COYPEL

78.

MME. DE M . . . EN HABIT DE BAL

Engraved by Pierre Louis Surugue in 1746

The etching and the full lettered impression.

AS his grandfather, father, and uncle were painters, Charles Antoine COYPEL (1694-1753) was bound in his turn to be a painter by tradition if not by atavism. Bright, cultured, and gifted with facility, much noise greeted his early attempts with the brush, and at twenty-one years of age he found himself a member of that Academy of which he was soon to become President, not so much as a serious artist, but as a man of the world, a favourite at Court, the arbiter of taste, first limner in ordinary to the King and the Duke of Orleans. He wrote little plays, lectured on fine arts, and liked to be considered as an eminent *littérateur* among painters.[1] He gave his mannered compositions the graceful French turn which, in the tradition of the pompous Louis XIV school, made up for character, and his twenty-five pretty pictures of Don Quixote's adventures met with such success that, besides being engraved, they were developed into cartoons for one of the most decorative and expensive Gobelins sets.

SURUGUE (1714-1772) was the son of a good etcher and burinist who had established a print-selling business and refused to sell his prints for fear he might not be able to replace them. Their dispersal is recorded in Wille's "Journal" as an event among connoisseurs. Received at the Academy as an engraver in 1747, Surugue junior, whose highly-coloured technique is hardly distinguishable from his father's, did good work for Chardin. Portalis and Beraldi pick out "Mme. de M . . ." as his best achievement. Lady Dilke calls it "enchanting." He, too, collected prints, but instead of trying to form complete sets after this or that artist, he only bought the best by the best, and "looked over his portfolios with greater "pleasure," says Basan, "than if they held no end of plates, of which rarity often "is the main attraction."

Anne d'Arpajon (1713-1794), wife of the Maréchal Duc de Mouchy, had been the "Madame l'Etiquette" of Queen Marie Antoinette, her most formal and rigid first lady-in-waiting, a regular and once a beautiful martinet. The Revolution did

not affect her strong character and wonderful vitality. At eighty years of age she rescued from Paris a religious community, whose property and school had been seized, and turned her fine château into a home for poor priests. Imprisoned at La Force in 1794, she showed the utmost fortitude on mounting the scaffold with her husband. The original picture, a pastel, of fan-like effect, is still in the possession of the family.

R. Purcell, an English mezzotinto engraver, copied this plate in reverse and issued it as a portrait of Madame de Pompadour.

[1] Through their connection with Boileau, the Coypel family indulged in a rather unfortunate mania for writing poetry, and Charles Antoine elicited from Voltaire this neat epigram: "They say that our friend "Coypel imitates Horace as well as Raphael. As he endeavours to surpass them both, no painter rhymes "with such ease, no rhymer paints with such power."

P. DAVESNE

79, 80.

LES CERISES—LES PRUNES

A pair engraved by GÉRARD VIDAL

Advanced etchings.

THE original pictures by DAVESNE, a portraitist who gave lessons to Mme. Vigée Lebrun, but whose dates are not specified by La Chavignerie, were bought by Lord Hertford at the Horsin-Déon sale in 1868, and subsequently inherited by Sir John Murray Scott, who disposed of them in his lifetime.

Regardless of the superb borders, Bourcard attaches little importance to this charming pair in the ordinary state, but lays stress on the extreme rarity of the advanced etching of "les Prunes," where the girl's neck is still uncovered, and the *fleuron*, with Cupid asleep, is already inserted on the tablet.

The impression of "les Cerises" before us bears the stamp of the Mühlbacher collection.

PHILIBERT JEAN LOUIS DEBUCOURT

(1755-1832)

AS the engraver who creates, as the Proteus of engraving, he is styled a Master. His little share of immortality is principally due to a pair of prints which perpetuate with surprising felicity the whimsical aspect of Parisian life towards the close of the old *régime* and before the September massacres.

With David, future fine arts dictator, as fellow apprentice he studied awhile under Vien, whose classic standards left no mark on his small but spirited scenes from familiar or rustic life, obviously influenced by Teniers and Ostade, but of thorough French colour and character. Though more apt to imitate the most contrary masters than to acquire a manner of his own, yet, as the painter of popular "Fêtes de Village" and "Vues de la Halle," caught on the spot with racy observation, his start was decidedly promising when, in 1781 or thereabouts, it occurred to him that, if *genre* pictures enjoyed less favour since printed facsimiles looked almost as well on the walls, there must be more in colour prints than Academicians would admit, especially in such original prints as would eventually be wrought by his own hands to reproduce solely his own compositions.

Anglomania having meddled with French taste, Basan and Poignant, editors and publishers, created a demand among people of fashion for prettily illuminated engravings made in London and favoured by Queen Marie Antoinette. Owing to this commercial development and the need of shifting for himself without deviating from his first calling, Debucourt devoted three years to the study of the old methods for the interpretation of pictures on copper in plain black and white, as well as of various new devices for a more or less deceptive imitation in colours. With the quick-witted powers of a born specialist, and with the help of Guyot, another former fellow pupil who had relinquished painting and taken up engraving, he mastered the intricate technique of the craft in its successive stages. From Le Blon's early attempts to print pictures with three plates and Dagoty's endeavour to alter the corresponding scientific principle, from the crayon manner invented by

François and improved upon by Demarteau, from the stipple favoured by Bonnet with his plates fitting to keys, from the expeditious aquatint as practised by Charpentier, Le Prince, Stapart and, according to a different formula, by Regnault, Janinet, Descourtis, from all these essentially French processes his industrious application extended to one untried as yet in France, namely mezzotint, with its vigorous modelling, its characteristic indefiniteness, of which Cochin was wont to say that only the English could handle it.

In their admirable survey of the conditions of engraving when Debucourt took the field, Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold remark that, keen as he was, he owed it to himself to enrich the arsenal of a guild already so well provided. In fact, besides arriving at an improvement of the imitation of crayons by modifying somewhat the soft ground method, he was able to write under the pair, "Il est pris, Elle est prise": "done with a new process invented in 1792 by the author," the so-called reticulated process.

His first successful experiment, the ultra rare pair, "Amants poursuivis," "Amants découverts," appeared in 1785. From that time until 1800 Debucourt's labour is represented by 140 copperplates from which he printed fifty-six engravings. For twenty-eight of them he used as many as four plates each. On the first plate he aquatinted in black and white all the values of the subject, with its gradations of shades and half tones, while the ground of the paper itself, left white on purpose, supplied the high lights. The three other plates fitting to keys had to give separately the primary colours, red, blue, and yellow; green being obtained by the combined impression of the last two, and so on for other composite colours. As several of these plates, measuring from fifty to sixty centimetres, were entirely worked with tools, the effort spent upon them may be easily gauged, but the mechanism of the effects achieved baffles detection. Could the Master have dashed his compositions on the copper with the brush? That sort of stippled canvas which used to let a murky ground pierce through similar earlier prints disappears; there is no aridity about his shadows and clouds; the coolness of water colours pervades his pale yellows, indigoes, and pinks, the cheeks of his tiny ladies might have been rouged with rose powder. Netscher would envy the sheen he brings forth from mellow satins and pelisses. What harmony of transparent hues, what command over the infinite minutiae of the process, what magic handling of tools that by dint of re-cradling and scraping suffuse a plate with velvety softness, or transfer upon it the luscious impasto of *gouache*. Look at the "Deux baisers," or

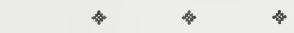
one of the "Promenades" framed on a wall; they cease to be engravings, your eyes are actually treated to pictures by a painter whose scope may have been trifling, but whose skill was amazing. For, as pointed out by Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold, "with the Debucourt of the first period engraving was but an extension of paint-"ing. He meant to multiply his works even in the appearance given them by his "particular pigments and succeeded admirably. A mere glance at any one of his "prints shows whether the corresponding original was in oils, *à la gouache*, "or a pencil drawing. In proportion to the extent of his graphic knowledge and "of his skill with all sorts of tools, he relied for his effects and his strokes on "a regular palette of ingeniously blended processes. This is why his plates, his "colour plates, have a depth, a soundness, a look not to be sought for in the "productions of his immediate forerunners, Regnault, Janinet, Descourtis, sur-"passed by him as performers by a composer or, in this case, by an original "painter, engraver, and chronicler of manners all in one: of the art and the craft "*facile princeps*.

"His particular chromatics do not rest on the scientific basis laid by Le "Blon, yet he is guided by it more so than Janinet. Far from trying to obtain "the modelling by printing one ink over the other, he indulged, so to speak, in "a mechanical sort of illumination, but used it with genius. With Debucourt the "black plate provides the whole outline; colour puts life and transparency into "his compositions, but has no share in the drawing.[1]

"As, if we except a few plates where the technique is pure, his fifty-six "engravings dating from the eighteenth century reveal ten more or less mixed "manners, not easily disentangled, their approximate classification should depend "on the salient method of each performance, or on the facsimile obtained, and "adhere to the logical order in which these manners followed one another, so as "to show how each new acquisition proved a benefit to the subsequent plates."

In the French nomenclature, borrowed from Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold, the expression *gravure en teinte* does not necessarily denote tinted or colour prints, as the word *teinte*, a tint or tinge distinct from some principal colour, implies in ordinary parlance. In the technology of the craft *teinte* is used as tint is in contrast to pure black in the semi-English word mezzotint, an alteration of the Italian *mezza tinta*, and denotes the vaporous effects achieved on plates that present none of the sharpness and definiteness of line engraving as on the "pure burins" of Nanteuil and Drevet. With the other expression, *aux outils*,

stress is laid on Debucourt's unremitting labour with tools, which governs and explains his life-long work. When the outline of the subject was etched and bitten on the copper, he carved and chased, as it were, the bare metal by means of more than one hundred different steel chisels, roulettes, cradles of various calibres, burnishers, scrapers, erasers, straight and curved burins and points, either through the mere pressure of the hand or with the help of a goldsmith's hammer. A slow process, no doubt, but one which enabled him to lay by or take up at will what he had merely roughed out, to re-touch, strengthen, or tone down what was finished, to alter, blend, or set to rights shades and half shades. Plates so engraved yielded a greater number of fine impressions on account of the hardening of the metal and the solidity of the hollow parts.



The master's ten processes in his palmy days are defined as follows by the above-named authors:

I. *Gravure en teinte aux outils*, imitating pictures, such as "Les deux Baisers" (1786), "le Compliment" (1787), "les Bouquets" (1788), which present the appearance of small oil paintings, and "la Rose," "la Main" (1788), "Annette et Lubin" (1789), of a smoother aspect as reproductions of *gouaches*.

II. *Gravure en teinte aux outils*, imitating aquarelle. While the process is the same, the look of the prints differs, inasmuch as the colours on the originals, diluted with water and gum, are more delicate. Remarkable specimens of this style, for which the master used his finest tools, are "le Menuet" (1786), "l'Oiseau ranimé," "la Promenade de la Galerie" (1787), "la Noce," "le Duc d'Orleans" (1789), all printed with four plates.

III. *Mezzotinto Anglais*, introduced into France by Debucourt in 1787 with the pair "Heur et malheur" and "l'Escalade."

IV. *Manière noire*, or the classic form of mezzotint, before the English improved and made it their own. It is not explained why Debucourt in 1790 should have gone back to a comparatively primitive method of sombre and patchy effect, lacking the warmth and harmony of chiaroscuro characteristic of the manner he had practised three years before.

V. *Gravure aux outils*, imitating pencil, another variation of the first process, giving a new result, as on the "Rose mal défendue" (1791), which reproduces to perfection the original drawing.

VI. *Gravure aux outils sur fonds à la résine.* This alliance of chemistry with a multiform handwork has yielded the finest of all French "painted" prints, the "Promenade publique" of 1792, a *chef-d'œuvre* born of the mutual support of two processes: of aquatint which laid the vermicular foundation of the mother plate, and of the *gravure en teinte* on which all sorts of usual and unusual tools have fondled the details and furbished the colours. Having rocked out his figures, Debucourt sowed grains of resin on the masses, ground, and sky, then he let the acid bite in the accessories, the foliage, and whatever must be outlined: a happy and risky mixture which worked wonders with that single plate, but when allowed later on to overrun some engravings, on which necessity compelled the great little Master to interpret the indifferent pictures of others, clashed with mezzotint and smothered the semi-tones.

VII. *Gravure reticulée completée aux outils*, whereby chemical engraving steps openly to the fore. After the manner of Sandby, Debucourt sprinkled thick granulous resin instead of powder on the copper, heated almost to melting point. Thus the acid penetrates into the interstices, and lays a reticulated net on the plate. After several bites this reticulation determines the deepest shades; with the intervention of tools, precision and strength is given to the drawing. When the impressions due to this process are in colours they must have been inked with the dabber—*à la poupée*—the net being too compact to admit of the superimposition of several plates.

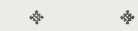
VIII. *Gravure en teinte aux outils*, imitating indian ink drawings, the fine tints of which are obtained solely through burnishers. One of the most successful facsimiles in this style is the "Calendrier Republicain pour l'an II."

IX. *Vernis mou*, or soft ground etching, as used by François and by Van Amstel for their imitations of crayons, and as a number of Englishmen practised towards the end of the eighteenth century. Debucourt, who improved the process, arrived with it at such a precise reproduction of the cross-hatchings of a drawing that his "Vue d'une Ferme Picarde" has been mistaken by Messrs. de Goncourt for a lithograph.

X. *Gravure au pinceau*, of which "l'Oiseau privé" and "Pauvre Annette" (1795) are the choicest specimens. Unlike ordinary aquatint, this method admitted of the imperceptible blending of tints through successive strokes with brushes dipped into appropriate mordants, either fluid or syrupy, according to the case. So delicate a technique implied an exceptional dexterity to the detriment of durability;

in fact, as soon as the first impressions were taken, Debucourt had to work his plates over again, thus altering their aspect.

The above French definitions have been adhered to with reference to every print by the Master, entered in this catalogue.



Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold reckon that, between 1800 and 1832, Debucourt brought forth nearly five hundred more plates, wherein all styles and qualities jostle one another: "although using the most diverse methods, he adhered chiefly "to a mixed form of aquatint, and even more so to the favourite *gravure en "teinte aux outils*, admirably suited to his industrious hands, his sharp eyesight. "The impressions obtained with it were even and brilliant, the effects elicited from "the copper ever new. . . . With keen intuition he discerned the suitable subjects, "adapting every process to the requirements of art, fashion, and trade. In his old "age he even tackled new-born lithography.

"Above all, throughout half a century, from the eve of the Revolution to the "July Monarchy, Debucourt never lost sight of three principles which govern "engraving in general, copperplate engraving in particular. The first is the "essential part played by technique. One must be born a colourist; one may "become an engraver and to define painting an art, engraving a craft, is not to "discredit the latter, since a profession may be carried on with genius. The "second is to treat engravings as the means to multiply works of art intelligently, "without trying to rarefy unduly the corresponding impressions. The third "is to extend to copper the treatment befitting a noble metal which expects to "be incised straightforwardly, or openly stippled, but is averse to having its fibre "tampered with, and its creative powers limited by the treachery of acids. The "immortality of certain etchings is due to the spontaneous work of dry-point, while "it can be affirmed that no aquatint, however rich, will be granted such letters "patent as are awarded to plates engraved with the burin, or wrought with any "other steel tool."

To quote now Emile Dacier: "If for his technique Debucourt had depended "on the Flemish when beginning to paint, it is obvious that when he took to "engraving he made himself as familiar with the prints by Hogarth and "Rowlandson as with those by Janinet. What he did with their respective "methods is seen at first sight, though how he did it is not so easily explained.

"By what miracle without apparent effort did he combine the limpidity of water "colours with so solid and delicate a modelling? How did he manage to preserve "on his pure whites the vibrating note they strike on the original *gouaches*? "How did he spread all over a plate the harmonious light which sets off the "picture and gives it depth? It is the secret of the improvisatore and the "virtuoso, the secret of a moment; one it took years for him to discover and which "he lost almost directly. . . .

"Debucourt's prints were quickly spread about the world on the wings of "fashion. The times had gone by when a black and white engraving after "Watteau, Chardin, or Greuze could hold its own for years and years on the "walls of almost immutable homes: in the course of half a century, while the "author of 'la Galerie du Palais Royal' was steadily at work, subjects and "processes in vogue had succeeded each other faster even than Governments, "and, like those who follow the fashion, the Master had known many a fleeting "success. Who thought anything in 1832 of the 'Menuet,' 'l'Oiseau ranimé,' "'la Promenade publique'? Hardly would those delightful sheets of paper have "fetched their original sale price of 6 livres for the first, 12 for the third. Dis- "carded and ill-used, they were only to return to light in the second half of the "nineteenth century, when an art long disdained came into favour once more. "Everybody knows what happened. The commercial value represented by such "perfect colour prints went on increasing, being multiplied by the coefficient of "rarity and fancy. The Goncourts used to wonder that the 'Promenade publique,' "bought for 15 sous on the Pont-Neuf by Fossé d'Arcosse and knocked down "at 225 francs at his sale in 1864, could fetch more than 1,200 francs when "'l'Art du XVIIIme Siècle,' was published. What would they say to-day? Such "plates as 'la Rose,' 'la Main,' which fetched 3,285 francs in 1891, reached "33,000 francs in 1909, and we have seen a lettered state of 'les deux Baisers' "step from 601 francs in 1877 to pretty nearly 30,000 francs in 1920. Other "prints in proportion."

Admitted to the Academy in 1781 as "Painter of small subjects in the Flemish style," Debucourt exhibited in 1785 the "deux Baisers," essentially a French boudoir subject, not a Flemish one at all, from which he moved to a different kind of composition. In turn he played upon the two chords of his lute:

on the demure, pretty peasantry of country weddings or broken pitchers, and on the cosmopolitan aspect of Paris throngs, seen through slightly exaggerative lenses. If ever he lingered to watch rosy babies wishing their grandparents many happy returns of the New Year, the demand for highly-flavoured relishes would cause him to seek racier surroundings, for even with *gouache* engraving, business is business.

The real Debucourt, the Debucourt in request, covers seven years of work; before 1785 he did not exist, after 1792 he exists no more. The following are the landmarks of his progress: in 1786, two perfections of colour printing: "deux Baisers," "Menuet"; in 1787, "Promenade de la Galerie," "Cruche cassée," "Oiseau ranimé," "Compliments"; in 1788, "Bouquets," "la Main," "la Rose"; in 1789, "la Noce," "Annette et Lubin." In 1791 all the sparkle and charm of his art are placed at the service of the Revolution—a new toy to a temperament craving for novelty. He gives out the conventional portrait of a patriotic Louis XVI, a brilliant one of the Duke of Orleans (No. 85); he works at a national almanack, a calendar, a dial of the ten new hours; he prints a few inferior familiar scenes of girls wearing busbies, of boys dressed up as soldiers; patriotism and morality at reduced rates. In the same year the "Rose mal défendue" bursts forth as a concession to old foibles; in 1792 that crackling piece of fireworks, "la Promenade publique," winds up the grand manner. The Reign of Terror having set in, a tricoloured decalogue upset the style, dried up the genuine vein of Debucourt. His brush began to indulge in broad jokes and over-did them. After all, artists must live, and who is to prevent upstarts from decorating their residences with pictures and prints that will make them laugh?[2]

Gradually, under the discredit to which David had doomed eighteenth-century art, old Debucourt hardly dared to style himself a painter; it was merely as engraver that now he put his name to a few fairly bright skits on the ridicules of the day. A hard price to pay for having been partial to a new order of things and heedless of the morrow, as if homely concerns and foresight were incompatible with a liberal calling. To Jazet, his nephew and factotum, who urged him to put something by when he received payment for his "Manières du jour," he replied as one century might have done to another: "You will never make an artist." But he was keenly susceptible to oblivion and in 1832, seeing at one of his former editors a selection of Charlet's lithographs to which his two "Promenades" served

as outer covers, he confessed to being heartbroken. Tastes had changed; after Debucourt's funeral came a return of no assets.[3]

And now what of the painter? His early exhibits in 1783, and the "deux Baisers" two years later, were not spared the sarcasms of an anonymous visitor to the Salon: "this precious finish, this over-soft chiaroscuro promise a capital "carriage varnisher, or a fine decorator of porcelain"; then again: "the young "man who has so thoroughly studied Teniers had no time to look at the colours "of his master." Certainly his microscopic brush was never meant to launch out into bold effects, nor could it help over-polishing dainty pictures which, seen through the wrong side of opera glasses, gave the impression of lids for jewelled snuff-boxes; but certainly Debucourt had gathered from the palette of the eighteenth-century school a bouquet of fan-like hues. Without any of the blackishness of the minor men of his time, his dough was mixed with a creamy radiance which flashed in the heart of his compositions. A pearly bluish lighting singles him out from the practitioners of the Flemish *pastiche* as the artist who, inebriated with Steen, De Hoogh, Terburg, and even Vermeer, stands half-way between the Dutch and the French school.[4] Together with Fragonard, he personifies the ingenuity and wit of pre-Revolutionary Bohemianism; he knew how to observe, to compose, to paint, and, oddly enough, though a member of the Academy he never tried to become academic.

As less than thirty of his original pictures have survived, every one of them now in private collections, with the exception of a couple of very small tondos at the Louvre, it is his work as an engraver that assimilates his delicate and entertaining gifts to those of letter writers who recounted their own times by dint of human and picturesque anecdotes. The simplest chronicles may hold some of the philosophy of history; likewise the Palais Royal "Promenades" are worth chapters of memoirs. They illustrate a book of which we need not peruse the text in order to comprehend a passing, incoherent phase of Parisian manners; their figures are sentences, their colours stand for thoughts; imagination does the rest.[5]

[1] Mr. Courboin remarks that Debucourt's black plate, entirely modelled, printed in a tone of light indian ink and laid on the colours, instead of playing merely the part of foundation as in the Le Blon process, retains its own accent. A fragment of the black plate of the "Almanach National" for 1791, considerably enlarged by Fenaille in his "Debucourt," shows that very often black is the soul, the unsuspected soul, of colour prints.

[2] To a friend, who summed up his three different styles and called him an art weathercock, Debucourt replied: "With all deference to myself as a retiring and harmless individual you might as well compare me "with that eminent knave Talleyrand, whose best boast in life is to have moulded himself successfully "into three different personalities at the service of three consecutive and entirely different forms of "government."

[3] A museum office and its drudgery fill now the three rooms which Debucourt occupied for years on the Louis XIV court of the Louvre at the back of the Colonnade, fifth door on the left, coming from the Infanta Garden. The small apartment had been given up to him by Mouchy, the sculptor, his father-in-law, when the Louvre kept open house for artists, and Fragonard and Hubert Robert were fellow boarders there.

[4] *Pastiche*, from the Italian *pasticcio*, a pie, is an artistic or literary work in imitation of the characteristics and manner of other artists and writers; in music it is a composition where various selections from different masters are linked together anyhow. *Pasticheur* is a painter of *pastiches*, who pretends to be original.

The Goncourts maintain that through the "accent" of this Frenchman, who set Teniers up again in fashion, they detect, besides the Dutch, a streak of English inflection. A picture by Debucourt, somehow, reminded them of Wilkie (?).

[5] The Debucourt Exhibition, held at the Louvre in 1920 under the auspices of the Society for the study of French Engraving, included 28 pictures, 12 drawings, 100 original prints, as well as 14 prints by Leveau, Guyot, Moitte, and other engravers, Jules de Goncourt amongst them, who etched the "Fête villageoise." Art criticism is indebted to this exhibition for a capital catalogue by Messrs. Dacier, Herold, and Vuaflart, from which we have derived most of the above information.

ANNETTE ET LUBIN

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

The Master's First Period (*Louis XVI*)

81.

ANNETTE ET LUBIN

Engraved and printed in colours in 1789

Proof before the date was erased, but with the fleuron on the vignette in the margin.

Fenaille, No. 22.

MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 17, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

THIS state is described by Mr. Fenaille as the second, because Debucourt took a few trial proofs of his colour prints in black; witness one of this very subject, now in the Fould collection, and one of the "Menuet de la mariée" (No. 90).

Dealing with the process known as *gravure en teinte aux outils*, printed from four plates to imitate a picture, not a water-colour or a sepia drawing, Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold subdivide into two groups the prints so obtained by the Master; those that convey the effect of an oil painting, such as "les deux Baisers," "les Compliments," "les Bouquets," and those presenting a softer aspect, more like a *gouache*, such as "la Main," "la Rose," "Annette et Lubin," on which Debucourt used in a fragmentary manner the technique of the English mezzotint and which rank among his finest works.

❖ ❖ ❖

"Annette et Lubin," a tale by Carmontelle dealing with the wooing of two shepherds of the Louis XV soft paste type and turned by Favart into a comic opera, had made the success and brought about the marriage in real life of its leading interpreters, two happy-go-lucky actors who, in old age, were to find themselves stranded. But Paris, who had once shed tears over their sorrow on the stage, was not forgetful, and a subscription was opened on their behalf by artists and men of letters.

Debucourt wrote to the "Journal de Paris" in April, 1789: "To try and "help this interesting septuagenarian couple I am engraving a scene from the "delightful comedy which sums up their amiable youth. May the image of a "sweet peasant girl of fifteen go a long way to succour the now broken-down old

"woman who impersonated her! For every one of the first three hundred im-
"pressions sold I shall hand 30 *sols* to the real Annette and Lubin, namely
"3 *livres* per copy. Subscribers may be interested to know that the composition
"is one of the set drawn by me from popular subjects of our *Théâtre Italien*;[1] it
"represents the lover begging the Lord of the Manor to let him marry the
"virtuous shepherdess, and the bailiff interceding for them."

The Master had also announced that he would number and sign each impression, but no print has ever turned up to show that he remembered to do so. The first state bears the date, June 15th, 1789, in scratched letters which were subsequently erased.

As an unmistakable appeal to public sympathy, Debucourt inserted under the picture an aquatinted vignette with the pathetic portraits of Annette and Lubin as they looked in 1789. Among the rural attributes supporting both medallions is the sign-post of Beson, where the play was set. On full lettered impressions, a quotation from the play was added: "See my tears, Sir, put an end to her alarm, "take pity on us." There was a great demand for the print. The "Journal de Paris" advertised its sale at 6 livres: "Amateurs will recognize at once the "painter's happy knack of concentrating light and attention upon his heroines. "Circumstances and execution add interest to an engraving of which the sentiment "as well as the scheme of colour favour the present vogue of sets and admit of "its being paired with either 'la Cruche cassée,' or the 'Noce au château'" (Nos. 86, 91). A similar proof of this print, badly handled and faded, was included in Queen Marie Antoinette's portfolio now preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Judging from the date, it was in all probability the last addition to a collection from which other cares were to divert the royal lady's attention in that fateful year. *Sunt lacrymae rerum.*

Critics have not ascertained whether Debucourt engraved his own compositions after corresponding and finished pictures, as was the case with "les deux Baisers" (No. 84), or if he merely worked from sketches not to be carried farther, and probably treated as waste paper. His drawings are scarcer than his paintings. Next to twenty-eight of the latter at the Loan Exhibition of 1920, only twenty of the former were shown, including nine semi-classical illustrations for a translation of "Hero and Leander" issued in 1801 by Didot. The study for the medallion of old Annette under this print, mentioned by Mr. Fenaille, did not appear.

[1] When writing the above, Debucourt discounted a vague intention which he did not carry out beyond 1789. As a matter of fact, the list of his works contains no other theatrical subject but this and "la Noce au château," which illustrated another proverb by Carmontelle, both dated the same year.

The *Théâtre Italien* traced its origin to the strolling players who, in 1570, began to improvise in Paris the *commedie dell' arte*. Ever since it gained official recognition towards the close of the seventeenth century and replaced the *Comédie Française* at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, its repertory gradually became French. Built on land leased from the Duc de Choiseul and merged eventually into the *Opéra Comique*, a new *Théâtre Italien* gave its name permanently to a section of the Boulevards.

LE COMPLIMENT DU JOUR DE L'AN

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

LE COMPLIMENT
ou
LA MATINÉE DU JOUR DE L'AN.
Dédiée aux Pères de famille

LES BOUQUETS, OU LA FÊTE DE LA GRAND MAMAN

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

LES BOUQUETS

OU

LA FETE DE LA GRAND-MAMAN

Dédiés aux Mères de Famille

82, 83.

LE COMPLIMENT DU JOUR DE L'AN— LES BOUQUETS, OU LA FÊTE DE LA GRAND MAMAN

A pair engraved and printed in colours in 1787 and 1788 with the Master's name in scratched letters, before the addresses

First finished states.
Fenaille, Nos. 15 and 16.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 10 and 11, "gravures en teinte aux outils."

THE impressions of this famous pair taken from four plates have gone through four states; the first, a trial proof before a border imitating marble; the second, of which one specimen only is known (E. de Rothschild collection), with the title, but before the Master's name, and before the inclusion of a wooden horse among the toys in the cupboard of "le Compliment"; the third, or first finished state before the addresses, with the signature in scratched letters and the addition of a wooden horse, which gives a better balance to the left side of the composition in the first print; the fourth, with all letters.

Mr. Fenaille points out a subdivision of the third state, where on a few impressions only the title is ornamented with flourishes, as is the case with "les Compliments" in the pair before us.

On the approach of New Year's Day of 1788 the "Journal de Paris" advertised the "Compliments" as a print "likely to please the public at a festive season." Towards the close of that year the "Mercure de France" foretold as much success again for the "Bouquets," "since the same painter-engraver issues it as a com-"panion to the other." The first was dedicated to Fathers, the second to Mothers; the price of each was 6 livres.

Few eighteenth century family scenes strike a more genuine and unsophisticated note. Some of them, no doubt, Moreau's "Délices de la Maternité" (No. 334) for instance, are more definitive and elaborate, none breathe such sweet simplicity, such domestic contentment. For his infant sitters Debucourt had not far to go. The little boy who delivers a pretty compliment and thinks all the time of the toys in the cupboard, or hides the nosegay behind his mother's gown, and the little girl who hugs her granny, were his own son and daughter. But for the image of their

pretty mamma, he had to search in his sorrowing heart; she had then been dead nearly three years.[1] Her father and mother helped the widower, who portrayed them here as having adhered not only to the Louis XV attire of their youth, but also to the habit of dressing early, judging from the New Year's clock which had just struck nine. On the walls are discernible two popular and rather forbidding prints after Greuze: "la Malédiction" and "le Paralytique."

The Salon critic of 1788 wrote: "Although Mr. Debucourt has sulked ever "since 1785 and will not exhibit his works, we have managed to see his seasonable "New Year's composition, the minute details of which are sure to attract attention. "It is quite touching to realize that he had to draw from memory his children's "mother and that he can master his grief to the extent of being able to diffuse "such home-like happiness upon his work."

In a dainty almanac for 1791, entitled "Etrennes du Jour de l'An," Levachez reproduced both compositions in small size, reversed, in bistre and also in colours, under the name of "New Year's gifts," leaving out the servant in one. To L. Guyot is due a quaint round adaptation of the "Compliments" in 32mo.

The original pictures have not been traced. An advanced sketch of the second, not unlike the dashing style of Fragonard, was rescued after the artist's death from a heap of old studio rubbish to which a maid was about to set fire. Mr. Jacquinot gave 1,000 francs for it at an auction in 1877; it is now in the Panhard collection. Another sketch not quite so good was included in the Decourcelle sale in 1911.

[1] She was the daughter of Mouchy, the sculptor, and a niece of Pigalle and Allegrain.

LES DEUX BAISERS

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

84.

LES DEUX BAISERS

Engraved and printed in colours in 1786

Proof with the Master's name scratched.
Fenaille, No. 7.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 4, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

THE lion of coloured prints; the cynosure of collectors. As explained in the catalogue of the Salon of 1785 under the rubric of the "Feigned caress," "here is an old gentleman examining the picture of his wife, whom he is having "painted looking at his own portrait in a locket. While stroking his cheek and "leaning on his shoulder she takes advantage of the husband's foolish confidence "and slips a note to the young painter who kisses her hand."[1]

The Abbé de Fontenay, whose thin criticisms assumed the form of rhymed legends, suggested in this case the following: "A feigned caress is a stroke of "deceit which should be distinctly shown; the only distinct feature here is the "frame."[2] The usual "anonymous Visitor" pronounced a reticent judgment: "Paintings inordinately praised call for a pinch of satiric salt"; the "Journal de France" wrote: "Poor colouring, pretty details"; the "Unprejudiced guidebook" for 1785: "Too much Teniers, too much enamel"; and the "Manual of appreciations and doubts on current topics," published at Amsterdam to avoid the censor: "Because his exhibits two years ago were not sufficiently elaborate, now by way of "improvement this new-fledged limner goes to the other extreme; false colours, "mannered drawing, meagre touch."

On the whole the opinion of a more or less responsible press was that by mixing Baudouin and Lavreince together, by re-hashing Greuze and Fragonard in the Dutch manner, many memories were awakened, but no personal style was displayed.

The "Galerie des Modes," a less sophisticated periodical, held a decidedly modish view: "The Salon provides us for once with a perfect specimen of the latest "spring fashions. The delightful *gouache* numbered 155 shows a pretty woman "attired in a white Trianon muslin frock over a pink under-dress; two red roses— "mark the novelty—hang from the blue sash; the gown as airy and diaphanous "as if made out of nothing; but what artful simplicity, what style. As for the fair, "curly, powdered coiffure, wreathed with roses *à la Lamballe*, rigged up and plaited "*à la Vergy*, it is a study in itself for the Court wig-maker. This artist has taste,

"is well-informed, and will soon lay down the law. The green hangings, the "furniture, even the Montgolfier clock under glass[3] are perfectly appropriate to the "studio of a portrait painter in vogue." The editor forgot to express the hope of seeing in the following year on a companion picture of the same green *atelier* a copy of "la Galerie des Modes" instead of the "Journal de Paris" or of "les Lunes du cousin Jacques"[4] which good eyes could discover on the table and the stool of "les deux Baisers." Soft sawder, however, on the part of the leading ladies' paper did not counterbalance the sarcasms of other arbiters, for Debucourt took umbrage and, until 1804, fought shy of public exhibitions.

But one swallow does not make spring, and the critics of 1785 did not go far towards building or wrecking a reputation. With his popular vaudeville subject of a "Feigned caress" smartly tucked up, essentially Parisian and spruce, the artist had taken the fancy of private viewers at the Salon, in defiance of professional fault-finders. Next day his name as a painter of fashionable trifles was made. That he had been quite candid in the choice of his subject, that his admirers meant no mischief we would not swear. As by-plays of a "two kisses" order were said to be occasionally going on behind the King's back, allusions to the family life at Trianon were whispered before the little canvas. By rousing curiosity such mental reservations fostered success, and, although at this period of his career Debucourt looked upon an engraving merely as the precise multiplication of a picture even in the particular appearance given it by its mediums, yet he outdistanced his original "deux Baisers" by turning it into as alluring a print as any *gouache* by Baudouin, in spite of an open disregard for the most likely shades. The delicate technique, the perfect and brilliant make-believe, created a sensation, not only among buyers of articles of wall decoration for boudoirs, but also in the small world of *cognoscenti*, whose fastidious requirements of subject, wit, and execution were fulfilled at small cost. The man underrated yesterday as a sham Teniers or a china decorator was hailed to-day as the only painter-engraver who created.

Ranked at once above most prints, impressions of "les deux Baisers," regardless of a supersensitive process of colour, and for the sake of an unusually amusing subject, were framed and permanently exposed to light; a circumstance which, after a lapse of 135 years, accounts for the extreme rarity of an intact impression, whatever the state. The proof before us, quoted by Fenaille, is considered by Mr. Danlos as the finest of six which are known, finer than one in the E. de Rothschild collection.[5] The opalescence of the young woman's gown, the freshness of the roses in her hair, are unexcelled. The minute details mentioned by the "Galerie des Modes" of 1785, the pigments on the painter's bottles, the title of the paper and book introduced in the composition, are so clear and distinct, the condition in every way is so limpid and genuine, the margins are so rich, that this inestimable impression compares to the average specimen of the second and third states in more than one ambitious portfolio, as a genuine kiss to a feigned caress.

[1] A picture of the "deux Baisers," with background and accessories merely sketched in, once in the A. Sichel collection, sold in 1886 and mentioned by Messrs. de Goncourt, could not be the original shown at the Salon of 1785.

The subject reminds one of an episode in the "École des maris" where Isabelle gives her hand to kiss to Valère, above the head of Sganarelle. Moreau drew the scene and Masquelier engraved it in 1769 for the Bret edition of Molière.

[2] The wording of this weak epigram does not sound quite so flat in the text as in a prose translation.

[3] Aviation clocks owed their vogue to Queen Marie Antoinette, since she had ordered one, after attending the first ascension at Versailles in 1783 of a large and light bag inflated by Montgolfier with smoke, its ascending power being due to the lightness of the heated air compared to an equal volume of air at a lower temperature. A sheep, a cock, and a duck in a case had been suspended to the balloon, and the Queen was most interested to learn that these first aerial travellers were uninjured, except the cock, which was lamed for life, having been kicked by the sheep before the ascent.

[4] A fashionable, trashy magazine edited by Beffroy de Reigny.

[5] No proof of "les deux Baisers" has turned up at auction for many years. At the dispersion of the Delizy collection in 1913, a lettered impression of it with good margins fetched 18,200 francs. When privately bought in 1890 its condition was remarkable, but exposure to light having altered it after a few years, the owner was advised to put it away. Dampness having then damaged it, it was found necessary to wash and touch it up. Before the operation was undertaken the print had been photographed, and when its photogravure in the sale catalogue was compared with the impression itself, buyers wondered what could have happened, such discrepancies of tone being apparent between the two.

At the Della Torre sale in the same year 14,960 francs were given for a lettered impression with small margins. At the Phipson sale in 1920 a mediocre print state fetched 680 guineas.

85.

LE DUC D'ORLÉANS

Engraved and printed in colours in 1789

Third state without the date.
Fenaille, No. 20.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 15, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

WITH the Assembly of the States-General in May 1789, new personalities suddenly assumed in France an enormous importance, and the trade in popular engravings altered its bearings accordingly. The slump in pictures of royalty, even in pretty prints of Queen Marie Antoinette, brought forth a demand for civic subjects, likenesses of politicians and theorists. Having taken ungrudgingly to commissions in keeping with the claims of democratic shop windows, Debucourt produced the finest work of the day in this special line of iconography; the portrait printed in colours from four plates of the first Prince of the blood, Philip Duke of Orléans, turned radical reformer, on whom three years later the Commune of Paris was to confer the startling title of Citizen Equality. Within an oval medallion a big, mischievous head, a coarse face of port wine complexion, a rich crimson coat crossed by the blue ribbon and studded with the star of the St. Esprit, the highest order in the kingdom; the whole showy performance somewhat overladen with attributes, allegories, and a legend: "Beneficence under the features of "Minerva holds out a helping hand to indigence shielded by the Orléans arms. "The Genius of patriotism plans public felicity."

The "Journal de Paris" advertised the likeness as "vigorous, harmonious, "altogether satisfactory"; the "Mercure de France" commented upon the appropriate inscription and pointed out the advisability of subscribing immediately to the print as well as to that of "Annette et Lubin"—an odd pairing—for three francs each, "while four or six are likely to be charged soon after the issue."

A polished *grand seigneur*, a cynical voluptuary, not a dark scoundrel, the Duke of Orléans (1747-1793), having married the richest heiress of the time,[1] determined to play a part equal to that of his great-grandfather, the Regent, whom he resembled in character, debauchery, and charm of manner. The court looked coldly on him, the Queen disliked him, the aristocracy envied his wealth, his wit, his freedom of etiquette. So boldly did he parade liberal ideas, largely learnt in England,[2] that he was believed to aim at becoming the constitutional King of

LE DUC D'ORLÉANS

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

La Bienfaisance, sous la figure de Minerve tend une main secourable et l'Indulgence et la couvre d'une Egide ; aux Armes d'Orléans ; près d'elle des enfans regardent l'abondance et la consolation, plus loin le Génie du Patriotisme médite des projets pour le bonheur et la félicité publique.

Dessiné et gravé par Le Vachez Peintre du Roi

Chez [illegible] rue [illegible] la 1.re porte à main droite en entrant

France, and that in 1789 Monarchists saw the gold of Orléans as prime mover to the storming of the Bastille, just as Republicans later on were to see the gold of Pitt in every germ of opposition to themselves.

As Deputy for Paris to the Convention, Égalité gave his vote in favour of sending Louis XVI to the scaffold, but his compliance did not save him from suspicion, for he was imprisoned under the Reign of Terror, and guillotined in November 1793. His son, Louis Philippe, then Duke of Chartres, became "King of the French" from 1830 till 1848.

It seems particularly fitting that Debucourt should have painted and engraved this portrait: for it was Égalité who had thrown open to the people the grounds of his residence, the Palais Royal, which won for the artist a little share of immortality through two incomparable prints.

[1] On his wedding, as he had not taken the right place at the altar, he jumped over the bride's train, to the amazement of a royal attendance.

[2] He was often on a visit to his intimate friend the Prince of Wales, and contracted that form of Anglomania that made horse races, jockeys, and colour prints as fashionable in Paris as in London. At Carlton House he met Grace Dalrymple Elliot, who was to share his affections with the Countess de Buffon. Her portrait by Gainsborough, now in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, a bequest of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, was paid for by Égalité, who had his own picture in hussar uniform painted by Reynolds as a present for the Prince. What remains of that full-length, after a scorching fire, now hangs at Hampton Court. Its mezzotint by J. R. Smith shows a marked resemblance to Debucourt's print, but the Duke of Orléans complained to Sir Joshua of the apoplectic look given him "as if he had been another "Lord Heathfield" minus the key of Gibraltar.

86.
HEUR ET MALHEUR
ou
La Cruche Cassée

87.
L'ESCALADE
ou
Les Adieux du Matin

Engraved and printed in colours in 1787

Third states.

Fenaille, Nos. 12 and 13.

MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 8 and 9, "mezzotinto et trois planches aux outils."

A GREAT year in the annals of Debucourt, 1787 was the date of his "Palais Royal Gallery walk." As a diversion in that complex undertaking the artist relapsed into an *intermezzo* of a lighter nature, more consonant with the traditions of his school. From Greuze's already famous "Cruche cassée" he borrowed the notion of innocence at sweet seventeen, but he put into it a less allegorical admission of an unconscious slip.[1] It is the old story of a French Jill who, having gone to fetch a pail of water, suffered Jack to assist and to detain her; now the girl, more bashful than remorseful, cools her blushes under the shade of a wood, and apparently forgets that she has dropped one of her shoes in the grass.

The "Mercûre de France" advertised the print as "expressive and graceful"—one that could be paired at will with the "Escalade," or "la Noce," or "Annette," according to the kind of sequence amateurs might prefer to give the story: the "Escalade" being suitable to the imagination of cynics as a natural sequence to the first indiscretion; the other two being intended for the fair-minded. At the Decorative Art Museum in Paris (a branch of the Louvre), among a choice display of colour prints, an impression of "Heur et Malheur" has been mounted as a drawing in order to conceal its utter lack of margins. In such a place this expedient should be taken as a fitting compliment to the process of an artist who, by actually painting his own compositions before he engraved them and had them printed in colours, won a double mastery over their inward and outward expression.

The scene of "l'Escalade" is laid in the courtyard of a farm. Both figures look pale in the pearly light of early morning: the girl no longer bashful, appeases the watchdog with a piece of bread and kisses her lover good-bye before he climbs over the wall. The general tone of the plate is a little too bluish, no matter how early the impression.

HEUR ET MALHEUR, OU LA CRUCHE CASSÉE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

HEUR ET MALHEUR

LA CRUCHE CASSEE

A Paris chez Basset rue du Bac

L'ESCALADE, OU LES ADIEUX DU MATIN

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

L'ESCALADE

ou

LES ADIEUX DU MATIN

With particular reference to this pair, Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold lay stress on the influence of mezzotint, with its vigorous and velvety modelling, over Debucourt, who kept in touch with foreign art developments. "Far from usurping "the continental method of scraping a copper plate, English engravers had "bettered and shortened it, by starting to work on the half shades and not on the "pure black, whence the name of mezzotinto. Frenchmen, somehow, seemed to "shun this process. Did they find it too slow, did they object to it as yielding "but a few fine impressions; were they hampered by the secular tradition of the "burin, or else had they failed to master the improvements to which mezzotint "owed its superiority over the classic and deliberately black *manière noire*, lacking "all intermediary shades? It was for the Proteus of his art and craft to fill the "gap. Probably Debucourt had some plates prepared in London, certainly he "engraved according to the English process 'Heur et Malheur' and 'l'Escalade,' "two admirable prints, though somewhat strong in tone, a drawback due to the "super-imposition of the colours, which is apt to thicken the outline. He did not "persevere, however, in this technique or only used it fragmentarily in 'la Rose,' "'la Main,' and 'Annette et Lubin'" (Nos. 88, 89, 81).

The pair has been re-engraved by Magnier, and "l'Escalade" alone by Lemoine.

Both impressions before us are from the Fraser and the Anthony Hope collections.

[1] Already in 1781 Debucourt had given the name of "Broken pitcher—le Juge ou la Cruche cassée"—to a picture of which there exists an anonymous and unfinished etching, probably an early experiment by the artist himself, and also a finished engraving by Le Veau, issued in 1782 and dedicated to Pigalle the sculptor, an uncle of Madame Debucourt. Through the obvious effort to bring into a Rembrandtesque contrast the lily whiteness of a fair culprit and a red-robed, fur-capped, old magistrate, the small canvas, now in the collection of Mr. A. Fould, is decidedly inferior. Goncourt likens it to a Teniers copied by some unsober Scotsman.

88, 89.

LA ROSE—LA MAIN

Engraved and printed in colours in 1788

Third states.
Fenaille, Nos. 17 and 18.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 12 and 13, "gravures en teinte aux outils."

DEBUCOURT could not resist long the call of his light vein. Such domesticated scenes as "le Compliment" and "les Bouquets" (Nos. 82 and 83), were immediately followed by a pair of prints disclosing under flowery bowers amidst water jets and statues the trysting place where two charming young men make love to two fair ladies who remind one, says Goncourt, both of Pamela and Heloise, ready to yield to their wooers, not unlike the sheep ensnared in the respective *culs-de-lampe*.

Perhaps no two eighteenth-century plates epitomize better than these the very spirit of the *estampe galante* and the soft persuasive tones of colour engraving. Parny's little poems, "la Rose" and "la Main," transcribed under each subject, first warn the credulous and innocent Justine not to accept the rose, "for when a "lover gives he demands far more in return"; then, as she has taken the flower, being too much in love to listen to reason, they conclude that "the hand kissed "by Valsin has promised all the rest."[1]

The heroine of both compositions is Debucourt's favourite model, whose unmistakable *figure poupine*, as that particular type was called, turns up in "l'Oiseau ranimé," "la Noce au château," and again in both "Promenades." The pretty tail-pieces carry out the theme of each print; in the first a sheep is about to be caught in a net, and in the second blindfolded by Cupid.

There are five states to each plate; three bearing the master's address, *Cour du vieux Louvre*, have only one dot after his name and the date 1788; two subsequently offered for sale by Depeuille with his own address, *Rue Denis, No.* 52, *Section de Bon Conseil*, have two dots after the date. In point of quality the first three states are practically one as belonging to the original and genuine issue with its mellow hues, kept down, as it were, not forced, its soft background, its transparent dresses and silky garments. But when Depeuille, who bought the plates, had their colours strengthened to satisfy popular taste, the general effect of both subjects was altered, the costumes became showy, the faces more rouged, the trees heavier and somewhat gluey. The difference cries out.

LA ROSE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

LA ROSE

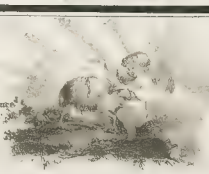
C'est l'âge qui touche à l'enfance ;
C'est Justine, c'est la candeur.
Déjà l'amour parle à son cœur.
Crédule comme l'innocence,
Elle écoute avec complaisance
Le langage souvent trompeur.
Son œil ravi se repose
Sur un jeune homme à ses genoux,
Qui d'un air suppliant et doux,
Lui présente une simple rose
De cet amant passionné,
Justine, refusez l'offrande,
Lors qu'un amant donne, il demande,
Et beaucoup plus qu'il n'a donné

LA MAIN

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

LA MAIN.

Quand on aime bien, l'on oublie
Ces frivoles ménagemens
Que la raison ou la folie
Oppose au bonheur des amans
On ne dit point, la résistance
S'enflamme et fixe les désirs;
S'éveillons finissant des plaisirs
Que sont trop souvent inconstance.
Ainsi parle un amour trompeur,
Et la coquette ainsi raisonne
La tendre amante s'abandonne
A l'objet qui touche son cœur
Et dans sa passion nouvelle,



Trop heureuse pour raisonner
Elle est bien loin de soupçonner
Qu'un jour il peut être infidele

Juliane avoit reçu la fleur
On exige alors de sa bouche
Cet aveu qui flatte et qui touche
Alors même qu'il est menteur
Elle repond par sa rougeur:
Puis avec un sourire celeste
Aux baisers de l'heureux valsin
Juliane abandonne sa main,
Et la main promet tout le reste

e Ch.er de P

a Paris chez Lantara rue du vieux Louvre N.o 58.me porte a gauche en entrant par la colonade, au 1.er

Although Debucourt's prints were almost invariably hung on the walls, and consequently faded through exposure to the glare of light under glass, it must not be assumed that the slightly evaporated appearance of the best "Mains" and "Roses" is merely the effect of too much sunshine beating upon them. The Depeuille impressions were also framed and injudiciously treated; yet their showiness remains and betrays the awkward overhauling of the copper-plates.

Attractive as the pair is, and reckoned among the classics of the style, rarity, as in the case of "l'Oiseau ranimé," accounts to some extent for the record prices recently fetched by them and already quoted in this catalogue. Otherwise, "le Menuet" and "la Noce," for ready invention and composition the masterpieces of Debucourt, hold the supreme evidence of his skill with his favourite process, and are the most perfect facsimiles of pictures.

At the Debucourt Exhibition held in Paris in 1920, besides two impressions of the second state of "la Rose" and "la Main," a proof was shown of the lower margin of "la Main," with the letter, the poem, the *fleuron*, the address of Depeuille, and the following words scribbled by the Master himself: "Last retouch. "Mr. Lurat will come to-morrow morning at ten to ask for your acceptance, or else "to complete the retouch, if needs be."

Magnier has reproduced both plates.

[1] Evariste de PARNY (1753-1814), the "dear Tibullus" of Voltaire, gave vent to his love for Eleanor—Mlle. Troussaille, a Creole—in four volumes of erotic elegies now almost forgotten, but hailed at the time as specimens of impassioned and easy versification in marked contrast to the conventional style of Dorat. A lyric in the study room, an epicurean in real life, he contributed to oust the eighteenth-century *bel esprit* in favour of plainer wit and less smart sayings. Always an Anglophobe, he addressed in 1777 an "Open letter to the Insurgents at Boston," and in 1805 attacked George III with some absurd rhymes entitled "Goddam par un French Dog." His poem, "La Guerre des Dieux," is an impious parody of the Bible. Four charming unsigned vignettes illustrate the small edition of the "Opuscules de Mr. le Chevalier de Parny," issued in 1781 by Cazin.

90, 91.

LE MENUET DE LA MARIÉE—LA NOCE AU CHÂTEAU

A pair; engraved and printed in colours in 1786 and 1789; the first with the arms of Count de Cossé

Fourth state of the first and second state of the second.
Fenaille, Nos. 8 and 21.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 5 and 16, "gravures en teinte aux outils."

SILKY and iridescent, the process of aquatint—a feminine process—responded to the partiality of Debucourt for glittering accessories, for such operatic backgrounds of village scenes as the frivolity of the times took for granted, either because their ordinance could be traced to Watteau, or because Parisian notions of rustication swayed between the formal avenues of Versailles and the so-called English gardens of Trianon. The squire and his lady wearing a benevolent air and beautiful clothes, country folks dressed up for a pantomime, chestnut trees and shrubs as grown on the stage for the "Mariage de Figaro," conventions and baubles no doubt; but what grace, what happy grouping, in the pair of prints before us, what quintessence of Baudouin, Moreau, and Fragonard blended, and yet set forth, if with less science, certainly with more dash.

Among Debucourt's *gouache*-engravings of the Louis XVI period, "le Menuet" and "la Noce" rank with the "Palais Royal gallery walk" (No. 93). They outdo the "Noce" and "Foire" by Descourtis (Nos. 320 and 321), close relations of theirs, since the "Menuet" was issued originally as a companion to the "Noce" after Taunay, an overpowering companion with regard to the composition and perfection of printing. It was only three years later that Debucourt matched it with a "Country wedding" of his own, and touched it up in order to bring the new pair into harmony. Within the halo that surrounds the two most picture-like prints ever produced, the first is considered to be the finest, while the second is rarer because, as the "Menuet" had already been paired with another subject, a more limited demand was anticipated for the "Noce" and fewer impressions of it were taken.

❖ ❖ ❖

The subjects illustrate a proverb for amateur theatricals by Carmontelle, where Clairette, the bride, insists on leading the quadrille with the bailiff, and keeps the

LE MENUET DE LA MARIÉE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

LA NOCE AU CHÂTEAU

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

be-ribboned bridegroom on pins, waiting amidst the tol-de-rol of the party, until Colin himself, not such a great simpleton as he looks, pays her out by dancing *vis-à-vis* with the lady of the manor who, sly and wide-awake, enjoys the situation; so does the company, *abbés* and playing fountains included.

Both scenes suggest a Van Ostade kermesse, tempered by a touch of Greuze-like sentiment. Fine ladies sit or stand about, their pretty faces shaded by lace bonnets. Jack, the churchwarden, is there; Thomas, the chime-ringer; even old Will, the new father-in-law; in fact, the whole village and a few hard drinkers besides watch the stumpy, periwigged, black-coated bailiff who rounds his leg for the first dance, leading Clairette, slender and dazzling in the virginal attire of a comic opera bride. On her the artist has focussed beams of a lily-like radiance, of pearly sheen.

To buyers who had already coupled the "Menuet" with its first companion after Taunay, the "Noce" by Debucourt was offered as a tardy, though not quite a posthumous sequel to "Annette et Lubin" (No. 81). The motto "juncta placent" under the fourth state reads like a broad hint in favour of a far-fetched connection with two familiar characters prematurely grown old and supposed to attend their grand-daughter's wedding: Annette in a corner contemplating the scene, Lubin for the occasion having had a drop too much. These good folk—we are now in 1789—do not seem to resent the storming of the Bastille. The Master himself was by no means loth to celebrate the event; all the same, with this merry party his fireworks are nearly played out; presently, when he wants to be entertaining, he will lapse into caricature.

The two new prints were issued under the auspices of the Count de Cossé, who had been best man at Debucourt's first marriage, and was found to owe him 240 livres when he died. The name of this personage—first gentleman of the bedchamber of Monsieur, the King's brother, afterwards Louis XVIII—could hardly prove as efficient an advertisement as the rumour that two notorious and easily recognizable flirts had been ensconced in the front seats of the "Menuet." So vague a reference, however, is lost on posterity.

❖ ❖ ❖

Technically superior to "les deux Baisers" (No. 84), issued the same year, "le Menuet" marks Debucourt's full mastery over the delicate and complex process of colour printing with four plates, entered by Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold at the head of ten among the artist's particular methods of imitating pictures. "No essential difference separates his facsimiles of oil paintings from those of "water colours: only the aspect of the plates varies, for the hues of the latter "are more delicate." Counter to a chemical or resinous process on a vermiculated ground, which later on he was to borrow partly from the English and partly

from an Italian, Vangelisti, this manner of engraving gave Debucourt a greater freedom to retouch and blend his shades.

A unique progress proof of the "Menuet," reproduced by the same critics, shows plainly the stages of the work: "Debucourt began by the vigorous parts of "the picture, then tackled the intermediary tones, to end with the lightest. . . . "To the black or mother plate he added a yellow, a red, and a blue one, each "engraved in the same way. . . . The colours were distributed over the entire "surface: and all the three are to be found on the dark sections of the print. . . . "The printing followed the order of the colours: yellow, red, blue, according to the "respective transparency of the inks; the black plate came last. To arrive at the "perfect fitting of one plate over the other—*répérage*—by means of keys and at the "fusion of the colours the printing was done with four presses simultaneously, the "paper being kept properly moist with the help of wet intercalary sheets."

It is only fair to place on record the name of Chapuis, the printer of this wonderful pair and the rival of Blin junior.

The issue of the "Menuet" and of the "Noce" was advertised successively by the "Journal de Paris." To account for the high charge of six livres each—Debucourt's "Louis XVI" cost sixteen in 1789—it was explained that "the "process necessitated several plates, even a pink one, a precious feature which "warrants a ready sale, for such works are bound to please."

Writing for the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" on colour prints in 1889, Portalis ratified the opinion that "the promises given by the 'deux Baisers' were kept with "even more brilliance and fluency by the 'Menuet.' The delicately modelled heads, "the subtle countenances, a transparent sky, the gay, limpid look of the scene, the "harmonious tone, the exquisite style, masterly strokes, and vigorous accents of an "engraver in quest of effect and meaning, all these features combined produce an "impression hard to beat.

"If 'la Noce,' a worthy companion dated 1789, coincided with the knell of the "Monarchy, the master knew how to turn it into a merry chime. How humorously "he has rendered the bridegroom's awkward gravity facing the lady of the manor; "how can one help repeating one's self and stop praising the expression of each "physiognomy, the refined and clear colouring of this truly elegant work."

On the background of the "Menuet" towards the left, traces of a maypole on which a wreath is suspended are faintly visible. Probably the Master erased that festive fitting to avoid the symmetry of vertical lines on his plate.

L'OISEAU RANIMÉ

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

L'OISEAU RANIMÉ.

92.

L'OISEAU RANIMÉ

Engraved and printed in colours in 1787

Second state.
Fenaille, No. 9.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 6, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

THE catalogue of the Debucourt Exhibition of 1920 favours a belief that the Master meant to link with Janinet's "Comparaison" and "l'Aveu difficile" a composition of his own, of analogous character and size. While even among engravings three is no company, it must be admitted that, as the "Comparaison" alone had been published when "l'Oiseau ranimé" made its appearance, the suggestive symmetry of those two groups would have lent itself to a particularly appropriate pairing. But the intention, if ever it existed, was bound to be short-lived, for "l'Aveu difficile" having also been issued in 1787, Janinet would see to it that no other plate usurped its place next to the "Comparaison." However, when in the following year "l'Indiscrétion" came out, there may have been a new chance for "l'Oiseau ranimé" to find a mate, unless "la Joueuse de guitare" had stepped already between them (Nos. 203-206).

Such an assumption, based on the tradition that companion prints in the eighteenth century had a readier sale than single ones, is supported by a similar precedent in the work of Debucourt, who brought forth his "Menuet" in 1787 to match Descourtis's "Noce de village," and did not see fit to couple it with his own "Noce au château" (Nos. 90, 91 and 320) until 1789. In that particular case a comparison between the respective temporary and definitive sets establishes beyond doubt Debucourt's two-fold superiority of composition over Taunay the painter, and of process over Descourtis, the interpreter. On the other hand, owing to the shortcomings of Lavreince as a draughtsman and to the skill of Janinet as a craftsman, "l'Oiseau ranimé" leaves at some distance behind the trio of "Comparaison," "Aveu," and "Indiscrétion," more on account of its lively and expressive grouping than because of the technique with the tools.

Rarity, surpassing rarity, makes of this plate a sort of revived dodo, whose price beats all records, even though the pre-eminence of the engraver who creates may rest rather on his "deux Baisers," or his two "Promenades," not quite so seldom met with. As for "le Menuet" and "la Noce" (Nos. 90 and

91), which do not reach the same figures at auction, because more impressions of the pair were taken at the time, their quality and sheer beauty sweep the board and carry the day, nay the century of colour prints.

As may be ascertained in the catalogues of Fenaille and of Bourcard, the pseudo-state *aux seins découverts* does not exist.

Delteil: "Here is a print which shows the enormous strides in the price of "XVIIIth century engravings during the last fifty years or so: from 37 francs on "November 23rd, 1857, to 9,200 francs at the Lelong sale in 1903, when the rise "began in earnest."

The original water-colour of the same size, with figures turned the same way, signed "D. B. 87," belongs to Baron Maurice de Rothschild.

LA PROMENADE DE LA GALLERIE DU PALAIS ROYAL

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

The Palais Royal-gallery's Walk. — Promenade de la gallerie du Palais Royal

93.

LA PROMENADE DE LA GALLERIE DU PALAIS ROYAL

Printed in colours

Undescribed state between the second and third, with date 1787.
Fenaille, No. 11.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 7, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

AFTER mentioning a first state of this print which, like the phœnix, is supposed to have existed, although no collection boasts of its presence, Mr. Fenaille describes the second as follows: "Before the date 1787, before "the address and the inscriptions of the engraver of the lettering and of the "printer; only the titles in French and English. With the exception of No. 166 "on the left, the shops represented have no numbers above them." He omits to place on record the state before us, which bears date and address, but shows only one number above the shops; a state so far undescribed, except in the catalogue of the Mühlbacher sale of 1881, where the impression to which we refer was bought.

No state of this "Promenade" bears the initials of the Master; only his address is on it: "in the old court of the Louvre, fifth door on the left, "entering by the colonnade, first floor." The printing had been entrusted to Chapuis, the most skilled colour printer of the day.

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In June 1787, the "Mercure de France" advertised the plate: "It belongs to "the grotesque style, original and stinging on account of many odd and significant "figures. Its price has been put at 12 livres, owing to the laborious process "and colouring."

As revealed by the chronology of his works, the year 1787 sums up the psychology of Debucourt, his sincere emotions, his indulgence in trifles, the power of his wit. To the crowd walking along the wooden gallery of the Palais Royal, we owe the measure of his irresistible sense of humour, the reach of his thrusts.

"The Palais Royal: capital of Paris, drawing-room of nations, a diminutive "of the planet Venus and its whirlings, a digest of the universe for novelties; the

"Palais Royal, which anyone with any claim to style and joy of living was bound "to visit at least once a day, to which a great doctor used to send patients every "morning until complete recovery; the Palais Royal of theatres, cafés, restaurants, "billiard rooms and English bars, of dove-cotes, pigeon-holes and chambers, who "will give us back, who will conjure up once more the genuine eighteenth-century "Palais Royal?[1]

"Debucourt will do so, with two incomparable prints at an interval of five "years. The first of them shows the wooden gallery, its row of arches, pilasters, "and lilied lamps. Small panes let in the blue light of day; sham red and gold "fringed draperies fall on the window sashes below. The scene is concentrated "within a row of five shops, from 162 to 166, specially noted for such trinkets as "pretty girls are best able to handle and sell; fans, fancy jewellery, china, scents, "and dolls, in the midst of which, on the finest impressions of this plate, you can "perceive through the windows the outline of the customers, one of whom "readjusts his wig before the counter.

"Facing the shops is the medley, the cacophony of classes: an odd string "ever old, always new, of cosmopolitan idlers, a hubbub of foolishness and "viciousness, a typical Paris throng, so called because not composed of Parisians, "thrown together by a strange need of seeing and being looked at: mummers, "drummers, rogues, candid or jolly countrified folk out for a lark; a knight of "St. Louis, a tonsured cleric, an officer, an old libertine ogler, an apoplectic-look- "ing financier in quest of relaxation, all comers and goers of this international "thoroughfare, odd specimens of mankind created for the benefit of Debucourt's "pencil. An Anglomaniac strapped up in bright buckskin breeches, booted and "spurred, clasping a whalebone whip, wearing a bold, three-cocked hat, throws his "chest out of a red-collared, white frock-coat; an elderly swell swaggers in a green "streaked garment with large figured buttons; a tall, fatuous coxcomb holding a "huge beribboned muff, strokes his chin; attired in solemn black, a little bit of a "fop struts along.

"Women, endless women, of course, pass by, hurry or linger among the men, "cast soliciting or provoking glances, a word, a nod, beckoning by way of "threat or entreaty, signalling with a fan, hushing audible laughters within their "white Mongolian muffs. The old shrew prowling in the background goads some "wretched dinner seeker towards the first accostable gull. The foreground is "reserved for the prosperous hustlers, the toasts of the town, crowding all sail "next to such Cytherean stars as the Bacchante, the Sultana, Mimi called the "beggar, because her friends borrow even her linen, and she pretends she has "nothing to wear: Gogo, once a wash-house apprentice; Wild Mare, the pal of "Lady Godiva, who passes off as the niece of an English lord; Lemon Queen, a "blue-eyed, black-haired innocent lassie, who has just caused the leading Paris "fruiterer to put in an appearance at the bankruptcy court.

"On the extreme left a lady in a brown frock-coat and felt hat strikes a "bargain, whip in hand. Another, with a huge wavering councillor's wig, bridles "herself up in a sky-blue and swansdown pelisse, escorted by one of those diminutive "footmen whom any such prominent *belle* must attach to her personal service, a "red-coated page carrying a band-box bigger than himself. Three more alluring "Graces, clasped arm-in-arm, swing and sway on, their six black eyes darting "murderous glances. The prettiest of this bewitching trio stands out con-"spicuously in a demi-frock-coat of canary-coloured taffetas, a wide black hat "crowned with feathers over a ladder of ribbons, a patch on her cheek, a bunch of "roses on her bosom, her low-necked bodice indiscreetly veiled, wasp waisted, with "two watch-chains dangling on the skirt, her tiny feet shoed in blue *gros* silk. "Hail to her: she is Mlle. Ninon: on the authority of Jazet, the favourite model "of Debucourt, the glass of fashion among the leading demi-reps of Paris.

"The darling dolls are prettily rouged with the avowed rouge of great ladies "and courtesans, the acknowledged finishing-touch, the fillip to respectable attire; "they all do it.[2] Almost every dear little face is half-concealed under the latest "absurdity among bonnets, 'the studding sail,' within the extravagance of curly "wigs, Chinese puffs of false hair, and flounces of misty gauzes, through the creamy "fullness of mendacious neckerchiefs, the flutter of plumes, the bubbling of the "flimsiest baubles. Such a whimsical display of every inconceivable oddity of up-"to-date apparel is one of the chief attractions of Vanity Fair."

This and more besides was written by E. and J. de Goncourt, whose *bravura* passages baffle translation. More sedately Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold sum up the appreciations of Portalis and Beraldi, Bouchot and Fenaille: "Everything has "been said about both 'Promenades' . . . and it is only right that for the last "thirty years amateurs should have been contending for them at ever-growing "prices. In these compositions, which give the distinct impression of snapshots "and are really a very clever synthesis, Debucourt has condensed the quintessence "of a subject and realized the perfection of a particular style."

Critics should not be punctilious if the print does not pretend to be a scrupulously accurate presentment of the lively enclosure as it looked every afternoon, without a slight admixture of imagination. The jest was too rich to resist overdoing it, and unadorned reality could not prove quite so entertaining, had the Master restrained his fancy. If his uncle, the haberdasher, once refused him a paltry loan, and ridiculed his art as a living, here was a neat opportunity of showing off the conceited old dunce in his conquering dress-coat, his *mirliflore* muff, his airs of an upstart giving the glad eye to maidens dark and fair.

Out of forty discernible figures, nearly one half are caricatured. Under No. 165 the Master has his fill of fun between a flat-headed flunkey, three dwarfs, and an oddly-shaped individual, whose puffed-up, sallow cheeks make him look like a mask. The bumptious hump-backed creature passing the confectionery numbered

166 is in all probability the same who, with no less conceit, will reappear in the "Promenade" of 1792. In front of No. 164 an absurd old ogler and his fat friend are intended to set off the three Graces, the cynosure of the whole picture; next to them a little girl holding a bird strikes a much-needed note of unaffected Nature.

No doubt, as an engraver Debucourt owed some of his complex technique to the achievements of the great contemporary school of mezzotinters in London; but what of the original idea of the "Promenades" themselves? Besides their bilingual title, a token of popularity on either side of the Channel which they shared with Desrais's "Garden Walk," do these ultra-French compositions betray any British influence? De Goncourt answers in the affirmative when he states that to Rowlandson's colour print of the London Vauxhall, engraved by Pollard in 1785, can be traced the first suggestion of taking the Palais Royal, its frequenters, their by-play and tricks, as the subject of two semi-humorous pictures of a showy, disreputable crowd. The theory is attractive, but lacks documental support.

Bourcard insists on the superiority of this plate over that of the "Promenade publique" from a craftsman's point of view, although it is generally considered to be less amusing. A very fine impression of it from the P. D. collection (?) at Lyons fetched 91 francs in 1863. Bids move with the times.

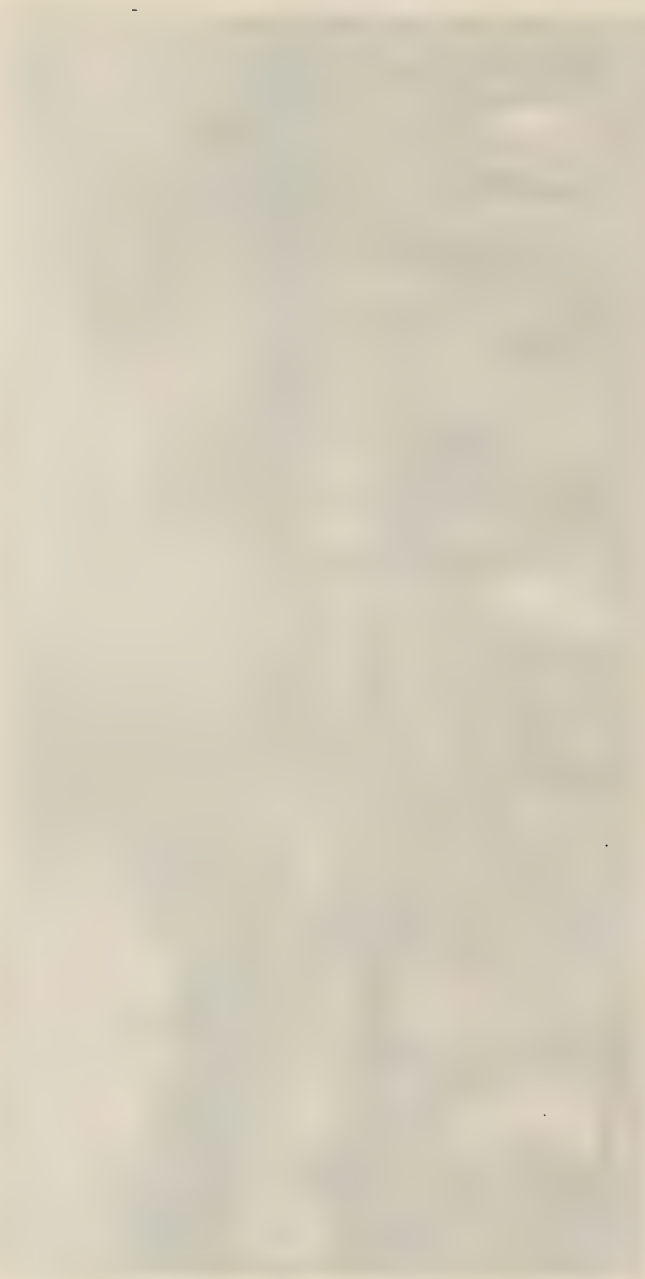
[1] The Palais Cardinal, as it was originally called, had been built in 1629 by Lemercier for Richelieu, who bequeathed it to Louis XIII. Queen Henrietta Maria was housed in it from 1644 to 1661. Louis XIV presented it as a residence to his brother Philip, head of the Orléans family and father of the Regent, whose great-grandson, the Égalité of the Revolution, in order to pay his debts, indulged in a speculation unheard of among princes of the blood. He let out to shops the ground floor of the Palais Royal, with the result that the arcades enclosing the garden where a "decently dressed, well-behaved" public used to be admitted, became a permanent fair, the gamblers' headquarters, the meeting-place of the most questionable set of people in Paris. The heterogeneous trades congregated there ranged from groceries, second-hand clothes, florists, fruit sellers, and confectioners, to jewellers and picture dealers; from the waxworks of Curtius and Madame Tussaud, his niece (1760-1850), down to such side shows as the bearded lady, or the beautiful Judith chopping off the head of Holofernes. The Duke of Orléans with his "Palais Marchand" was not spared the sarcasms of the aristocracy and the middle class, thus deprived of a quiet daily stroll among respectable company.

The following epigram commented upon the daily firing of a gun through the action of a convex lens in the centre of the garden at noon: "Safe shade and flowers, you meet all sorts of things here: your morals "may be upset but you can set your watch."

The liveliest and least reputable section of the arcades on the side of the Rue St. Honoré, reproduced by Debucourt and known then as "Gallerie de bois" was transformed in 1829 into a wide glass-covered passage called "Orléans Gallery," now used by the Colonial Office as a show place of exotic produce to stimulate emigration. Its respectable loneliness is positively depressing.

[2] Quintin CRAUFURD (1743-1819), "Fish" to his friends, the most Parisian of Scotchmen before and after the Revolution, who, having made a fortune in India, said that Paris was the only place where he could spend it; a man of letters, a collector of works of art, a personal friend of Queen Marie Antoinette, one of the most curious personalities of the time of Louis XVI, prominent again under the first Empire, wrote in 1787: "Lord . . . who has been spending a few days with me, is not a man easily astonished. Yet one "thing seems to surprise and puzzle him: that so many gentleman should walk about hat in hand for fear "of getting uncurled. Ladies he finds more to his liking, some of them anglicized in the prettiest way; but "all outrageously fond of plastering their faces, from the Queen herself down to the last *grisette*: all "determined to look like *papier-maché* dummy heads for a hairdresser's front window. . . ."

According to Mme. Campan, a revolutionary wit maintained that "with artists distance and rouge "went a long way to make the Queen."



LA PROMENADE DU JARDIN DU PALAIS ROYAL

By L. Lecœur. After C. L. Desrais

The Palais) Royal Garden Walk. Promenade du Jardin) du Palais Royal.

94.

LA PROMENADE DU JARDIN DU PALAIS ROYAL (1787)

Engraved by Louis Lecœur in 1788 after Claude Louis Desrais

Second state.
Fenaille, Nos. 11 and 33.

WHOEVER may have been responsible for the indiscriminate attribution of this rare plate to Debucourt either never did so much as look at the other two "Promenades," or having overheard of the Master's ten different methods of colour printing, without enquiring into their chronology, jumped at the conclusion that for want of signature the subject must vouch for the artist. The blunder illustrates the critical as well as the optical short-sightedness of a generation of mild amateurs, who could not grasp the difference of drawing and technique between one "Palais Royal Walk," and the other two. Where is Debucourt's indian ink wash of that period, where his peculiar lighting up of the faces, or where again are the delicate shades of his tinted and tooled process in imitation of water-colours, combined eventually with the resinous grain of aquatint?

A doubt as to the engraver of this composition having first been raised some forty years ago, two names were put forward to replace the Master's, those of Sergent and of Coqueret, contemporary imitators of Debucourt, especially that of the first, whose "Il est trop tard" (No. 314) had proved to be a remarkable endeavour in that direction. But a partial solution of the riddle was to be found on the plate itself, even without searching the files of the "Journal de Paris," which in January 1788 had advertised the "Promenade du Jardin" *issued by Lecœur* at 12 livres as a companion to the "Promenade de la Gallerie." The address, 55 Rue St. Jacques, inscribed upon it corresponded to that of LECŒUR, a skilled pupil of Debucourt, who occasionally signed "Cor," and whose well-known prints, the "Vieillesse d'Anette et Lubin" after Swebach, the "Visite à la Nourrice" after Morland, the "Visite au Grand Papa" after J. R. Smith, the "Chagrins de l'enfance," the "Bal de la Bastille," wrought at the same period with the same process, and bearing the same address, left by comparison no technical doubt as to his share in the second "Palais Royal promenade": second, not third, by order of dates. On two other engravings, "Blifil" and "Jupiter and Io," the direction "chez Le Cœur, graveur" was given with fuller particulars: "Rue St. Jacques, en face du Cloitre St. Benoit, maison du Chandelier "No. 55, au troisième."

And now what of the painter? Considerable light was shed upon his identity in 1890, when the original drawing for this composition turned up at the Destailleur sale and presented a striking similarity of execution with the works of DESRAIS (1746-1816), the pupil of Casanova, who never quite mastered his art, though, with the exception of an abortive apotheosis of Bonaparte, his sketches in bistre, his military and revolutionary scenes, did not lack character. For years he had made a speciality of illustrating the "Galerie" and the "Cabinet des Modes," two magazines patronized by Queen Marie Antoinette, until he entered the employ of Lamesangère, the publisher of the "Costume Parisien." The slight stiltedness of his work, the very shortcomings of his compositions, suited the conventional requirements of fashion plates where the grouping of figures had to be avoided, and all the sentiment to be expressed was centred in the latest shape of a gown or the scaffolding of a new head-dress. Indeed, the best among Desrais's modish drawings might have been studies and models for the "Palais Royal Garden walk." Several "repentances" or alterations on bits of paper stuck to the original now at the Carnavalet Museum, and corresponding minutely to the print by Lecœur, showed the latter to have been engraved from the former. Thus the artistic pedigree of both picture and plate was no longer that of a foundling.

On the same evidence Mr. Fenaille dismisses the attribution to Debucourt as false: "It is sufficient to compare together the three 'Promenades' to satisfy oneself "that the 'Garden Walk' is neither by nor after the Master: the drawing as well as "the engraving being decidedly inferior. The former was undoubtedly due to "Desrais, the latter to Lecœur."

Another authority on the subject, Mr. Emile Dacier, in a capital essay preceding the Catalogue of the Debucourt Exhibition held in 1920 by the Society for the study of French Prints, is no less positive: "The artist's masterpiece, the "'Promenade Publique' published in 1792, should be paired with the 'Promenade "de la Gallerie,' not so with the 'Promenade du Jardin' which had nothing "whatever to do with Debucourt, and was the work of Lecœur."

There is little doubt that the success of Debucourt's first "Promenade" suggested the "Garden Walk" as its sequel and a possible companion; even the symmetry of the respective inscriptions witnesses it. But Desrais was no plagiarist, and for the second act of the play he handled actors and scene within the limitations of his own psychology, holding literally to the plot more than to its humour. The ultra-Parisian slang of the "Palais Royal gallery" he did not possess, and if he tried hard to be amusing and only half succeeded, if his were bright colours, no subtle quintessences of diaphanous tints, if the groups imperfectly connected made no crowd, if his fun was less communicative, critics must remember that there has been only one Debucourt. Comparisons are worthless.

The "Promenade" by Desrais, classed by tacit agreement among collectors with the other two as forming a set, despite a different painter and engraver, has

the privilege of being the rarest of the trio. Only one unlettered proof of it exists. The impression before us, bearing Aumont's address, subsequently altered for that of Landié when the plate was touched up, is considered by Mr. Danlos to be the finest known. Bourcard, who inverts the precedence of the two printers, overlooks the fact that only the impressions by Aumont show no retouches at all. Mr. Fenaille himself, whose word on Debucourt is law, stumbles over both addresses; he does not seem to know that Landié's name, after having replaced that of Aumont, came to be erased altogether, and he ascribes the impression without any address to the first state, while it really belongs to the last. Even Homer occasionally nods.

Portalis dwells rather vaguely upon the controversy. He first wonders whether Debucourt before he engraved the "deux Baisers" did not try his hand with this walk round the "Café de la Rotonde"; then he is inclined to think that the plate, though unsigned, was merely an imitation of the Master's style either by Lecœur or by Morret.

On this score the author of "French XVIIIth Century Engravers" is inexcusably flippant, considering that the book was issued as late as 1910, when the religion of Debucourt amateurs was amply edified. That otherwise discriminating critic writes: "In the 'Promenade du Jardin' we get hints of the effect of the "Revolution on Debucourt . . . tempted into caricature such as detracts from this "companion of the 'Promenade de la Gallerie.'"

As for the Goncourts, always sure of their verdict on such matters, it seems odd, although their "Art du XVIIIme Siècle" was published fifteen years before the Destailleur sale, that all they had to say with regard to the ambiguous "Promenade du Jardin" should be condensed in an interrogative paragraph: "Must one attribute to Debucourt, whose signature and address are not on it, this "somewhat rough, rather burlesque and not very well composed engraving?"

The same motley throng that walked a while ago under the wooden gallery has strolled out into the garden and crowds two of the four oval trellised pavilions which in 1787 still surrounded the ornamental water in the midst of lime trees planted in fives, soon to be replaced by the chestnuts of the "Promenade publique." Between one of these annexes of the Café de Foy[1] and the other that did service as a bar, a striped awning shelters the customers who, having secured tables, sip ices and get cool, pick up the latest gossip, watch the gold-fish frisking in the pond as well as the ladies of mutable connections manœuvring on the lawn; country cousins most of them, out for an object-lesson on a civilization not prevailing as yet in the provinces, and of which the dressiest rabble of gay Paris seems to have been chief exponent, on the unconcerned assumption that "after us the flood."[2]

Judging by the sizes and shapes of feminine headgear, the brain of the capital,

or a section of it, must be out of joint. Desrais, an authority on fashions, treats us to a display of the latest creations; from lamp-shades and poke-bonnets to gauze puffs and English fan-like tiaras, from a Don Basile to the bi-cocked hat donned by a good-natured sort of "What you will" on the right who, being hugged by a chance acquaintance, feels none the worse for it. This is Liberty Hall.

The Mühlbacher collection, sold in 1881, contained an impression of the same composition reduced to octavo size by an unknown engraver. Of greater interest was the unique trial proof of an entirely different "Promenade dans un jardin public" by Debucourt himself, which turned up ten years later at the Kinen sale. The Master, who between 1805 and 1806 had undertaken to print it with his tinted and tooled process, apparently never carried to completion this endeavour to depict a new society flocking to a new fashionable resort.

In classifying Desrais's "Garden Walk" with the world-famous pair of "Gallery Walk" and "Public Walk" we keep to the beaten track, thus bringing together the genuine article and a contemporary attempt to imitate it. In the illustrated history of the Palais Royal the three plates are for ever inseparable, even though from the artistic view-point the disparity of one renders comparison difficult and union unsuitable.

[1] The Café de Foy, dating from the time of Louis XVI, faced the Rue de Richelieu; its so-called terrace occupied the Galerie Montpensier on the corner of the Palais Royal. The Duke of Orléans' marked attentions to the beautiful young woman who presided over the counter had first contributed to give notoriety to a place where all the idlers of the famous garden walk used to congregate: Royalists and Jacobins under the Republic; speculators, sharpers, *incroyables*, under the Directoire. The first subscription in favour of the aerostatic experiments of Montgolfier was opened there in 1782; there it was that on the 12th of July 1789 Camille Desmoulins prepared his rousing appeal to the people which was to hustle the whole world about.

The suppression of gambling houses, and the stricter police regulations affecting the feminine frequenters of the Palais Royal, contributed to the decadence of the Café de Foy. The premises were partially let to a dealer in paste jewellery under the signboard of the Swallow—*à l'Hirondelle*—which Horace Vernet as a boy had painted on the ceiling of the principal room. The place was pulled down in 1863, and the Galerie Montpensier altered beyond recognition.

[2] The Royalist, whoever he was, whose philosophy relegated the deluge comfortably to the next reign, when Necker tried to restrain extravagance and tax landowners, could hardly have taken in earnest his own posthumous fatalism. And yet that unfortunate utterance, circulated, repeated, and enlarged upon by the people, contributed to turn the flood itself upon French aristocracy.

LA PROMENADE PUBLIQUE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

95.

LA PROMENADE PUBLIQUE (1792)

Second state.
Fenaille, No. 33.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 25, "gravure aux outils, sur fonds à la résine."

FOUR are the states of this great print.

1st. Before the initials "D. B." and the date "92." Three impressions of it are known in black, presenting a technical more than an artistic interest; three are in colours.

2nd. In colours, before the letter, with initials and date on the right.

3rd. With the mention "drawn and engraved by Debucourt, painter and engraver."

4th. The same, with the address of Depeuille.

Fenaille, who doubts the existence of yet another state with the Master's address mentioned by Bourcard, quotes the impression in this collection as one of the exceedingly rare specimens of the second state. Its lower margin is exceptionally wide. Of two fine "Promenades publiques" which have turned up at auction since 1907, one in the Gerbeau sale was deficient in that respect, while the other in the Henrotte sale, with good margins, was of the third state.

Under the date "92" to the right either the letter "P" or the letter "G" is sometimes discernible; the first engraved on the red plate, the second on the blue, stood for *peintre-graveur* and soon disappeared altogether; their respective presence is the hall-mark of early and very brilliant impressions.

It was only in 1792 that Debucourt, whose technique until then had been limited to his own tools, tackled the chemical process brought into vogue by the English. Having etched the outline of his subject, he covered the plate with a resinous varnish so as to obtain a vermicular ground and allow the nitric acid to penetrate into the interstices. Then, with an arsenal of multiform roulettes, cradles, and scrapers, most skilfully handled, he proceeded to model accessories and figures. "Already his 'Croisée,' 'Lise poursuivre,' 'le Songe réalisé,' show the "endeavour to harmonize resin with tools and transfer the process to the domain "of colours. A fertile endeavour indeed," write Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold, "for "to this mixed manner we owe the 'Promenade publique.' It is neither an aquatint, "nor is it the *gravure en teinte aux outils* of the earlier 'Promenades,' but the

"ground of the mother plate has been laid with the first process, while the details "were carefully put in and the colours miniatured with the second. The mutual "support of each brought forth a masterpiece."

The print is often called "The Tuilleries Promenade"; but the Circus, built on the Palais Royal grounds in 1787—the year of the "Gallery Walk"—and visible in the background of this composition, identifies the scene beyond any doubt.

The original picture has not been traced. With due deference to Mr. G. Heine, the owner of Debucourt's fine "Fêtes des Loges," nobody would accept as genuine a *gouache* of the "Promenade publique" lent by him to the Exhibition of 1920 at the Arts décoratifs, but not entered in the catalogue.

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In the summer preceding the September massacres and the imprisonment of the royal family, Debucourt became once more the artist of the "Gallery Walk," for the sake of preserving a humorous, poetical, yet faithful view of the liveliest spot of the capital as it looked in 1792. Foolish virgins and fops on their last frolic are the chosen characters of this passing show of gay, revolutionary Paris. The words on their lips are almost audible; we know how the play will end. Let Edmond de Goncourt describe the scene:

"The Palais Royal of 1787 has undergone not a few alterations. Gambling "houses have spread over it the fever of ill-gotten, worse-wasted gains: a circus "erected on the lawn blocks the way now: we can see its pilasters, its ornamental "waters and roof garden. Pulled down, turned into coffins, the good old lime trees "that sheltered many a nightly assignation; chestnuts have been planted instead, "small as yet and already historic, for in 1789 they supplied honorary wreaths when "Desmoulins rushed here and rallied the people to storm the Bastille.

"There seems to be a lull in home politics now. Under the playful shades, all "condition of idlers jostle each other, chasing pleasure. Even the wigs of limbs "of the law and clerical hats are discernible in the throng. . . .

"In dress and deportment, men and women seemed to have reversed styles: "young bloods hold a fan, are powdered, rouged and made up, with bows of "ribbons at the knees; damsels affect a manly garb, wear waistcoats, walk with a "stick, carry a whip, ogle and stare at passers-by.

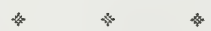
"Surely there must have been a key and a list of names to this great living "panorama; for, odd and absurd as some of the creatures seem, there is a tinge of "real personality about their appearance. Among the *beaux* in close-fitting kersey-"mere coats, high black collars, thrice revolving chokers, hair knotted in Cadogan "style, there goes the Duc de Chartres, son of Égalité, the future Louis Philippe, "alarmingly forward at nineteen, throwing kisses with his fingers, as rosy and

"delicate as his own sweethearts; the 'Almidor' in his best love-coloured bib and "tucker, pink jacket and breeches is the Duc d'Aumont, who fans himself and "smiles patronizingly, lazily stretched on three chairs which, had they only a "voice, could tell tales about flirts and politicians: chairs that yesterday withstood "the weight of stump orators of the dawning Revolution, and now give way under "the antics of an overgrown 'Cherubin,' who, as he nods to a friend, is struck all "of a heap. . . .

"Even dwarfs in this company ape lady-killers on tiptoe, as they did five years "before in the 'Gallery Walk.' Red liveried, a napkin under his arm, a tiny waiter "carries, none too hurriedly, two ices on a tray. A rose left on a seat marks an "assignation. The masterly group of four newsmongers who listen intently round "a table to a military expert, gives a vigorous fillip to the scene; the battle of "Valmy is not far off: Dumouriez and Kellerman will defeat the Prussians. 'Long "live the Nation.'

"All the Palais Royal is gathered here: its Serai let loose, its three hundred "and thirty-three sultanas all out. Courtesans, semi-virtues, toasts of the opera "and the ballet, tired of humming and quavering indoors, file off in pairs and trios. "Trailing frocks or 'Palais brooms,' shortened in front this summer, display the "finest stockings; huge hats have been almost superseded by linen bonnets 'made "of nothing at all'; round the hair, done up in classical curls, a looped bow of "ribbon may do service as headdress. Gowns are airy, flimsy, on the wing: three "shades predominate: rose, white, and blue, the tricolour of a day of glory to "shame tyranny."

It is the *olla podrida* of taste, fashion's tower of Babel: no two dresses alike, no two wigs of the same frizzing, no two coats of the identical cut. Samples are retailed here of all the nonsense Paris can think of, of all the materials France can weave, silks, organdis, gourgourans, lawns, gauzes, and tulles, named after the latest rainbow, love in the mist, a maiden's whooping-cough, complexion of a blushing nymph, liberty's dawn, and what not. All countries contribute to this undisguised fair of dissipation. Even Esther, the statuesque negress, the most expensive artist's model, is here for an airing: so is Manola, the bright Spaniard recommended by Goya to Fragonard, wearing a pale yellow shirt, a black mantilla bodice. The tall girl on the right, known as La Cauchoise, because she still retains her native costume, is a rising beauty. As for the ghost-like matron who will promenade her daughters about the garden, she has no business to be there and should be reported to the police. Have not the Bacchante, the tame Tiger, and Mlle. Launay been turned out of the place for misbehaviour, as everybody knows?[1]



Alive with the life that keen observation, genuine wit, and the accuracy of a

costumier can impart to perfect drawing, this print, classed from the day of its issue, was fortunately stored away by amateurs who saw in it a telling picture of minor Parisian history, far above boudoir and *genre* scenes. One feature of it impressed all connoisseurs then as it does now: the enormous difficulty overcome to blend such multiple shades, to graft them into one another and produce a perfect harmony of silky, lustrous, transparent *nuances.* Only a very fine impression reveals the full extent of Debucourt's achievement.

More so than in the "Gallery Walk" the Master has controlled his humour and for the sake of verisimilitude did not trespass on caricature. This time his actors are amusing rather than ludicrous, with the intentional exception of the strutting dwarf and the lanky country cousin, towing under his arms two freaks of women behind the great swell in a crimson coat. Otherwise the "Public Walk" is a poem of flattery, not a broad skit. The ladies in it do not lag behind their lovers and *vice versa*: what could be more alluring than the suppleness and attire of four young dandies about the centre of the composition: what more charming than their airs of *muscadins* on the point of turning *incroyables?*[2] If the "Promenade" of 1787 was a practical joke, that of 1792 held the pathos of a premonitory dream: the whole scene is hardly over-drawn, such folly could not last, the farce was bound to turn to tragedy.

The supposition that some figures of both "Promenades" were portraits is confirmed to a certain extent by the following passage from de Jouy's "Ermite," published in 1812: "I have just been looking over two prints of 1778 representing "a 'Walk through the Palais Royal' and an 'Evening on the Boulevards.' Among "the odd-looking bodies, which in those days made themselves conspicuous in "public, I have actually recognized myself in a small group of somewhat absurd "young fellows. The mischief of the painter was all the easier for me to catch, as "Mr. de Conflans and I were the only dandies then who wore short, unpowdered "hair. The discovery amused me, and reminded me of several people who may "never have dreamt of being represented there. The fact is, the main characters of "these old-fashioned caricatures had been so spiritedly handled by Debucourt, that "I could put a name on most of them."

Interesting as this quotation is in a way, it shows how casually writers of memoirs under the First Empire studied a print. Of course the date 1778 is wrong: de Jouy himself would have been fourteen then and hardly likely to be let loose about the Palais Royal. The "Evening on the Boulevards" is the "Gallery Walk" and not an evening at all, and as for short-haired young men, search as you will, not one is discernible on either plate.

There seems to be no doubt, however, on the authority of Jazet, the nephew of Debucourt, that, besides the portraits of historic and regular frequenters of the gallery and garden, such as the Duc de Chartres, the Duc d'Aumont, and the dwarf, the Master introduced some personal acquaintances, the couple seated to the

extreme right among them. As for the scraggy old gentleman leading two stumpy sisters, he was placed there as a revenge for a family squabble.[3]

Having signed his capital plate with the unassuming initials "D.B." the Master is himself no longer. Revolutionary interference hampers him. His glittering frippery must be cast to the winds; he is reduced to draw Liberties and engrave Fraternities so as to make amends for the jestings of yore. Every artist seems to have lost his memory by order. With the imposition of Graeco-Roman ideals, "A Bride's minuet," "A Baby's New Year greetings" or two "Promenades" are of no more account than the "Monument du costume" by Moreau, or the "Tales of La Fontaine," only half illustrated by Fragonard and given up for want of subscribers.

[1] See at the Bibliothèque de la Ville de Paris the printed humble request of three honest young women, "Mlle. de Launay and others," begging the Duke of Orléans for re-admission to the gardens after a "misunderstanding" with the authorities in charge (undated).

[2] *Muscadins*, from musk, was the surname given in 1792 to Royalist dandies, who always carried a conspicuous cane. Under the Directoire their *rôle* in certain circles of society was taken over by *Incroyables*, so called because of their incredible affectation of dress and demeanour. The letter *r* was suppressed from their speech; *incoyables* being the appropriate denomination.

[3] The following is a tentative bibliography of Palais Royal literature of a character coinciding with Debucourt's prints:

1762. "Soirées du Palais Royal avec la conversation des chaises."
1780. "Hamadryade du Palais Royal," par de Longueville.
1781. "Destruction de la Promenade du Palais Royal," par un Anglais à Paris.
1782-89. "Tableau de Paris," par Mercier, vols. vi and x.
1785. "Almanach du Palais Royal."
1785. "Lettre du Palais Royal aux quatre parties du monde."
1786. "Les délices du Palais Royal," with lovely vignettes by Dambrun: very rare.
1786. "Entretiens du Palais Royal," par Caracciolo.
1787-88. "Magazin de modes nouvelles."
1788. "Tableau du nouveau Palais Royal."
1789. "Réponse à l'auteur du scandale du Duc d'Orléans."
1790. "Le Palais Royal," with three curious prints of the "Sighing Walk," the "Circus," and the "Colonnade."
1790. "Nouveau tableau de Paris."
1790-91. "Journal de la mode et du goût," par Le Brun.
1791. "Almanach des adresses des demoiselles."
An X. "Sérails de Paris."

96, 97.

LA ROSE MAL DÉFENDUE

Two impressions engraved by the Master in 1791: one of them printed in colours *à la poupée*: also a copy reduced in size, engraved by BONNEMAIN, printed in colours

Second and third states of the first two respectively; second state of the small copy.
Fenaille, No. 27.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 22, "gravure aux outils imitant le crayon noir et en couleurs à la poupée"; No. 105, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

IN 1791, as the social pushing and showing rebounded on the tenets of the genuine Debucourt of *gouache* engraving, the unhappy thought struck him that he must launch out in a new style. Bartolozzi and his stipples had just crossed the Channel and the revolutionary art market had taken to them; milk and water as compared to the usual French fare, somewhat anaemic in looks, these Anglo-Italian prints; but there was a foreign air of distinction about them, a deliberate home-like respectability which came into competition with the prevalent Parisian article. From that moment, Debucourt began to experiment on a stipple in colour of his own about which there is little illusion: a mixed manner of etching and large-grained aquatint strengthened by the roulette, to be printed in colours by means of a single plate, each engraved portion of which corresponding to a given colour was successively rubbed with dabbers nicknamed *poupées*, soaked with different inks. For transparency and delicacy the process could not be compared with the *gravure en teinte* printed with four super-imposed plates, each bearing one colour; but it admitted of a larger variety of shades while obviating the errors liable to be caused by various plates doubling the outlines and disturbing the harmony of an impression. Evidently pleased with the result, Debucourt inscribed under his new works: "Engraved according to a process discovered in 1792 by the author": an author, he might have added, who, in order to keep pace with the latest fad, must be trans-mogrified into a French Bartolozzi. The evolution proved to be psychological as well as technical: from the humour spread over his pictures of the Louis XVI period, great within a small compass, the leader of Promenades and Minuets got astray among domestic Directoire scenes and, having slid eventually into the grotesque, took to roaring instead of smiling.

LA ROSE MAL DÉFENDUE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

In the "Rose mal défendue," the best achievement of a new method, we find the last evidence of the painter-engraver's double mastery over the character of his compositions; although the metamorphosis is in full progress, the early charm yet lingers there. Of the two unusually brilliant impressions before us, the single toned one is the more successful as a faithful imitation of the original black pencil drawing, while on the plate in colours such a slip is apparent as the printing *à la poupée* was chiefly intended to avoid.

So far Bartolozzi had only preached the theory, or else his convert would not become a hermit at a single hint, for this scene is decidedly heady. Judging from a room in disorder, the contest between a Sèvres china dandy and a young lady more ingenuous than shy must have been going several rounds. The chair is upset; cloak and gloves, a hat, even a book are on the floor: worst of all, the door is bolted.

Said the "Mercure de France" in August, 1791: "In the 'Rose mal défendue,' "both heroine and hero are dressed according to our latest summer fashions which "could not be displayed more attractively."

Together with his own plate, the Master issued a small-sized copy of the first state by BONNEMAIN, before the alteration in the young woman's bodice. With the exception of this minor and fine "Rose," a signal curiosity, no other work is known by the craftsman who in 1803 was best man at Debucourt's second marriage.

The Master's second period (Revolution and Directoire).

98, 99.

L'OISEAU PRIVÉ—PAUVRE ANNETTE

A pair engraved in 1795

Second state of the first, in bistre, before the address and dedication. Proof of the second, in colours—unique.

Fenaille, Nos. 51 and 52.

MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 34 and 35, "gravées au pinceau."

MR. FENAILLE mentions this impression of "Pauvre Annette" as "the state of the Christophle collection" (ex-Mühlbacher, 1881), the only one known before all letters and before the stippled line framing the subject. In subsequent states the mention "gravé au pinceau" was inserted, the sky is white, and the yellow clouds have been removed.

The pair is engraved in mixed manner, etching and aquatint, strengthened by the roulette. Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold dwell upon it as follows: "'Engraved with "the brush' is an unusual legend with Debucourt who observed a certain reticence "about his various processes. This mode of engraving or rather of completing an "engraving had been advocated by Stapart since 1773 in a pamphlet on the 'Art of "engraving with the brush.' Counter to the ordinary wash or *lavis*, it enabled the "craftsman to tone down the various tints and melt one imperceptibly into the other.

"Stapart turned to use the solubility of sea-salt embodied in powder with the "varnish to obtain the various grains, while Debucourt used resin, but this in no "way affects the work with the brush. Every degree of flat tint being once etched in, "the painter-engraver obtained the necessary mellowness and 'accents' by successive "strokes with brushes dipped in almost pure acids, either fluid or syrupy, accord-"ing to the case. So delicate a technique required an exceptional skill and could "yield but a few good impressions. As a matter of fact, after the first impression "Debucourt had to work his two plates over again, thus completely modifying their "aspect."

L'OISEAU PRIVÉ

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

PAUVRE ANNETTE

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

The Master's Third Period (Consulate and Empire).

100.

FRASCATI

Coloured impression (1807)

First state.
Fenaille, No. 196.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 65, "gravure en teinte aux outils."

A GENUINE, and to some extent a pathetic curiosity in its choicest state: the evidence of the artist's attempt to revert from his third manner to the first, minus the spirit and the frolic, in order to treat us to yet another "Promenade," this time in a serious mood and indoors, with a thorough change of puppets.

Through the Directoire, the Consulate, and the Empire, the once satirical and witty Debucourt had gradually let his pre-revolutionary brush and graver drift to the roaring jokes of the day, when truth must be overdone, models overstrained. Tired at last of his concessions to staid manners and new morals, the acute scene-man of a joyful Paris, now dead and buried, tried hard to find his younger self and his Palais Royal over again within the smartest *café* of the Empire in 1807.[1] But the old fun lacked, the crowd was dull, the contrast cried out, and the Master need hardly have stated under this plate that he had drawn the whole thing from a sketch taken on the premises: the period was stamped upon it as on a page from minor history.

The large hall is decorated in Pompeian style with statues of flute players against the walls, Victories charioteering over the doors and on stagey canopies: the stove pipes are made to look like mosaics, lean oil lamps have been inserted in the crystal chandeliers; on the straight chairs are thrown scarfs that might be classic chlamyses.

Waiters, powdered and aproned, distribute ices. Thirty-four figures in the foreground, from thirty to thirty-five in the background: each might have sat deliberately for the artist. Gentlemen in soft top boots, top hats, and square cut coats, dignitaries in Court uniform, dashing and be-plumed officers, some of the ladies in clinging short-waisted gowns, others in ball dresses, long gloves, turbans, and jewels, trailing their trains like tragedy queens; all the Empire society is there with

its lawful wife, even with a little girl who ought to be in bed at that hour; the whole scene, the company and its attire soberly told with scrupulous accuracy and no malice. "A lifeless document taken from life," says Emile Dacier, "showing not "so much a pleasurable resort as a wearisome haunt."

Paul Lacroix in "The Revolution and the First Empire" reproduces the print to convey some idea of a long since vanished place of entertainment where, under certain restrictions, appearances were saved. Fenaille quotes both unlettered and lettered states, laying stress on the rarity not only of proofs but of the genuine colouring upon them, for in this case the Master printed his work in black and hand-coloured a few proofs himself. None of the "Promenades" due to several superimposed plates could bring us nearer to him than this impression, actually stroked by his brush: yet no engraving by and after him is more unlike his grand Palais Royal manner.

As the Graces of yore had winged their flight, taste under the Empire took a wrong leap and Debucourt's most excellent fancy got rusty. This cold, respectable, well-meaning "Frascati," upon which Goncourt wastes too much praise, might pass off as the Academy picture of a chastised draughtsman who would not be caught at his old besetting sins again.

Two coloured stipple engravings "in imitation of a popular French print," reproduce two groups of figures taken from "Frascati" and were published in London—May 1807—for "la belle Assemblée."

[1] Frascati, at the corner of the Rue Richelieu and the Boulevard des Italiens, originally a Neapolitan refreshment room, was turned after the Revolution by Garchy, a well-known confectioner, into the most select gambling house in Paris, an outwardly respectable offshoot of Palais Royal dens on a larger scale, where good behaviour and evening clothes were the order of the night, where real ladies and gentlemen flocked after the theatre—no unaccompanied damsels being admitted. The establishment was leased by Napoleon's Master of the Horse, who drew a large income from it. In 1837 the main house, its pavilions, and gardens having been pulled down and turned into building lots, the offices of the "Figaro" and the "Petit Journal" were erected on that site.

FRASCATI

By and after P. J. L. Debucourt

Frascati.

101, 102.

JEUNE FEMME—L'INNOCENTE DU JOUR

A pair printed in black in 1807 and 1810

Second states.
Fenaille, Nos. 198 and 218.
MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, Nos. 67 and 79, "gravures en teinte aux outils."

BOTH aquatints belong to the series of "Mœurs et Ridicules du Jour" which from the 1st January 1801 went on by subscription for twelve years. The whole unequal and somewhat disconnected work is in the Master's third or Napoleonic manner, when he seems to have lost not only the precious secrets of his art, but also his originality and charm. Fenaille, who under No. 65 describes that cumbrous publication in its entirety, gives a reproduction of "l'Innocente" as the best subject. Bourcard recommends a few of the plates as specimens of Debucourt's last phase as well as of the fashions under the Consulate and the Empire.

The "Young Woman," a perfect modish model of 1807, seems to be distantly related to the "deux Baisers" lady of fifteen years before, or at least has learnt from her how to slip a note in the hat of a young man while escorting her old husband, whose cheeks she is about to stroke with the same caress.

As if to account for the qualificative bestowed on her, the "Innocent soul" of 1810 has the word "fidelity" labelled on her fan. Her innocence shuns neither milliners nor dressmakers. Although under the First Empire frocks and bonnets did not change as fast as they do, even in war time, under the Third Republic, yet on the year of Napoleon's marriage to Marie Louise this slender beauty already wore "creations" prompted by the advent of a new Empress, whose style must rise above the indolent graces of a repudiated creole.

In the background of the composition there lurks a trace as yet of the ways prevailing in society under the Consulate: blindman's buff is going on, such as was played at the Malmaison by Josephine, her daughter Hortense, and a handful of generals, watched over and teased by Napoleon. The renovated Court of 1810 would have looked upon the game as too familiar and rowdy.

Each print was sold for 3 francs. A few impressions were also taken *à la poupée* by means of one plate on which all the colours were laid at a time with the dabber.

103-106.

L'ORANGE, OU LE MODERNE JUGEMENT DE PARIS (1801)

LES COURSES DU MATIN, OU LA PORTE D'UN RICHE (1805)

LA MANIE DE LA DANSE (1809)

LE CARNAVAL (1810)

First state; open letter proof and second states respectively. The first three from the Master's series on "Les Manières du Jour" or contemporary manners; the fourth from his set of caricatures.

Fenaille, Nos. 66, 173, 210, and 219.

MCMXX Exhibition Catalogue, No. 44, "aquatinte au grain de résine;" No. 62, "aquatinte"; No. 75, "gravure en teinte aux outils;" No. 80, "gravure aux "outils sur fond à la résine."

APART from their historical interest, the "Palais Royal Promenades" are such evidences of delicate taste and quick powers of observation that one would not imagine Debucourt ever to have been tempted into broad skits. But though patriotic fever possessed him and reflected itself in his work, he does not seem to have taken too seriously the domestic virtues of republican families. The strange world thrown up by the waves of a new social order tickled his humour as well as his pencil with a surfeit of irony to the detriment of refinement.

Paris was topsy-turvy; the pell-mell of ranks, the ups and downs of private fortunes, the lessened strain after years of suspense had turned the capital into a revelry of people, clothes, and deportment. Fashion overdid the least whim of upstarts, as if the human figure must renounce the harmony of its lines, as if clinging, high-waisted gowns, run-away coats, and cropped breeches must unmercifully assert the contrast between fat and lean humanity, mould the consumptive, cast the plethoric, and drop the last sense of decency by exhibiting through slashed skirts the copious calves of matrons.

With such an epidemic of absurd demeanour raging in France, Debucourt

would hardly need ă magnifying glass to work at his rambling sketches of contemporary guys. "L'Orange," the best of them, the least remote from his original style, is unsurpassed for arrangement, for attention to details, for assimilation with ludicrous fads.

The modern Paris tantalising with an orange three equally modern goddesses[1] was Jean Baptiste, the artist's son and promising pupil, soon to be carried away by sudden death. Fourteen years before he had sat to his father for the little boy of "New Year's greetings" (No. 82) with a keener perception of his part; now a rosy-cheeked, curly, and fleecy hobbledehoy, necktied, booted, and strapped, he seems barely conscious of a rôle so many would covet.[2]

Debucourt depended for the trio of his alert divinities on the Directoire and Consulate fashions. Crowned with a nondescript plumed diadem, Juno wears a classic tunic over a Tanagrian drapery: Venus has dressed her hair *à la Tallien*; as for Minerva, she dons a jockey cap and carries a Medusa vanity bag. The witticism of the composition lies not so much in the allegory itself, as in the up-to-date countenance of the leading characters and the interested expression of the old bystanders.

As a picture of drawing-room manners at a time when Bonaparte reorganized French institutions, "l'Orange" is to a certain extent as instructive as the Palais Royal "Promenades" of fourteen and of nine years before. Impressions of it in black were sold for 3 francs: impressions in colours for 6 francs.

Having entered the print among the Master's aquatints, Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold call attention to the fact that the process has not been used in the pure English form. Debucourt turned to advantage its main quality, expeditiousness, but remedied its frailty by making a liberal use of aquafortis and of stipple, also by resorting to the most varied and ingenious tools, so as to vermiculate mechanically the bare or the varnished plate.

In "Morning Calls" no less than thirty-seven petitioners, vagabonds, swindlers and the like crowd before a rich man's door, go in and out, stand or pace up and down. Sundry inscriptions mark rather too obviously the respective liberal professions, thanks to which both ends seldom meet: poet, academician, musician, painter, and antiquarian. On the left, old Furet, a prominent light among chemists and beauty doctors, offers snuff to the boot-maker and the tailor. The identity of the money-lender whom Debucourt must have had in mind is lost to us, though there was in all probability a key to the print, published in the sixth month of the thirteenth republican year (1805) as "the most important of a set on contemporary "manners upon which the Master was engaged"—not without a tinge of Davidian formality, in spite of the subject.

In the "Mania of dancing the cancan," Debucourt makes sport of himself and the family of his second spouse. Personal dignity, however, is saved by the artist's tall figure, the pivot of his relative's fuddled legs and arms. On the left, the short,

stout man out of breath, who seems determined never to stop, is Jazet, his nephew by marriage, once his groom, next his apprentice, now his tout with print-sellers, some day his heir. A pair of pictures of Vestris dangle on the walls; cat and dog jump, servants and cook gamble in the kitchen and hall. Surely the Reign of Terror has overlooked this jolly home. And yet for years Debucourt had worn mourning for his first wife, for the little girl of "Granny's Birthday" (No. 83), for his bright hope, the boy who died at nineteen, until a lively disposition, the constitution of a horse floating somehow over it all, had gradually put a patch on his sorrows, had enabled him to start afresh, to re-marry and, though hen-pecked, to be still fond of good living.

The charges for the impressions of "la Manie de la danse," either in black or in colours, were the same as for "l'Orange."

The "Carnaval," dated 1810, is classified among the caricatures by the Master,[3] although the salient traits of each figure represented are not so exaggerated as to appear more laughable than the masked revellers themselves are meant to be, when driving or cavalcading in procession along the Boulevards during the week before Lent, throwing flowers, confetti, and wavy paper ribbons. Their costumes were principally borrowed from the classic characters of Italian comedy: Pantaloon, Arlequin, Pulcinella, the Doctor and Columbine, with the prominent French addition of Pierrot, whose efforts to be tragi-comic have not been overdone in the picture. The happy grouping suggests continuous motion and might have served as a slide for the wheel of life with which our grandfathers anticipated the attractions of celluloid roll films. Poor old Debucourt, in quest of a new manner, dedicated this trim, somewhat laboured composition "to gadabout patrons of masked balls," a feeble attempt to reassert the gaiety of bygone days.

The third and fourth state of the "Carnaval" show several alterations: the sky being clouded over, a house and a wall having been added to the background, and the address of Bance appearing after the title in filled, not open, black letters. It was sold as a companion to a scene of winter sport on the canal at the Villette. A few impressions were taken in colours with the dabber. The process, called chemical by Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold and first used by Debucourt in 1792 on "la Croisée," was combined with the work of toothed wheels of a peculiar shape.

On arriving at Cadiz in May 1832, four months before the death of Debucourt, Delacroix entered in his diary what melancholy thoughts upon the flight of time were prompted to him by a couple of engravings he found hanging in his inn: "les Visites, l'Orange," the first of which had been issued on the first day of the nineteenth century. The reference suggests to Mr. Dacier a few appropriate remarks on the vagaries of fashion which for nearly three-score years relegated to the lumber

room the "Menuet," "Annette et Lubin," and the "Palais Royal Promenades" in favour of the Master's caricatures, until some perfect specimens of his early colour prints were ferreted out and their commercial value came to be multiplied by the coefficients of rarity and of vogue.

[1] Paris (classical myth) offended Hera and Athena by awarding the prize of beauty to Aphrodite.

[2] The oval portrait of Jean Baptiste (1795), aged about eleven, in the act of putting his hat on a cat, is the best specimen of the Master's process *à la poupée*. Only one impression of it is known, once the property of Jazet's daughter and grand-niece of Debucourt, now in the Fenaille collection.

[3] The Italian word caricature was first used in English by that very detached and contemplative writer, Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) in "Christian Morals." The most notable early exponent of caricature in art was Hans Holbein (1497?-1554) in his "Dance of Death."

CLAUDE LOUIS DESRAIS

PROMENADE DU JARDIN DU PALAIS ROYAL

Engraved by Louis Lecœur

See under Debucourt, No. 94

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